February 3, 1979 US $1.10c/Canada 80c 20p

Aus 45c NZ 45c Den Kr5.85 Fr NF5.00
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NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

SHAM RIOT

Jimmy In Tears pages 7, 39

Rocky Sharpe p. 15

Howard The Duck p. 7-8

COYNE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS/Pic TOM SHEEHAN

KEVIN COYNE: Uncracked Cult, Unbowed Hero pages 24-25

ADVERTISERS NOTE

Booking procedures are back to normal.

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FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending February 5, 1974

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	TIGER FEET	Mud (Rak)
2	2	TEENAGE RAMPAGE	Sweet (RCA)
5	3	SOLITAIRE	Andy Williams (CBS)
13	4	THE MAN WHO SOLD THE WORLD	Lulu (Polydor)
4	5	DANCE WITH THE DEVIL	Cozy Powell (Rak)
11	6	ROCKIN' ROLL BABY	Stylistics (Avco)
8	7	ALL OF MY LIFE	Diano Ross (Tamla Motown)
6	8	THE SHOW MUST GO ON	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)
9	9	RADAR LOVE	Golden Earring (Track)
3	10	HOW COME	Ronnie Lane (GM)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending February 5, 1969

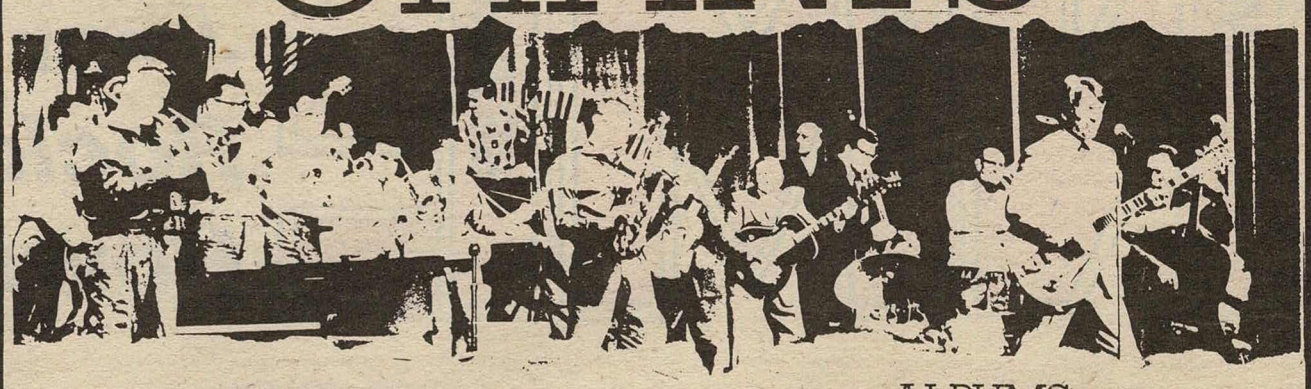
Last Week	This Week		
1	1	ALBATROSS	Fleetwood Mac (Blue Horizon)
4	2	BLACKBERRY WAY	Move (Regal Zonophone)
3	3	FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE	Stevie Wonder (Tamla Motown)
2	4	OB-LA-DI OB-LA-DA	Marmalade (CBS)
7	5	FOX ON THE RUN	Manfred Mann (Fontana)
5	6	SOMETHING'S HAPPENING	Herman's Hermits (Columbia)
8	7	YOU GOT SOUL	Johnny Nash (Major Minor)
6	8	PRIVATE NUMBER	William Bell & Judy Clay (Stax)
12	9	DANCING IN THE STREET	Martha & The Vandellas (Tamla Motown)
13	10	TO LOVE SOMEBODY	Nina Simone (RCA)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending February 7, 1964

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	NEEDLES AND PINS	Searchers (Pye)
4	2	I'M THE ONE	Gerry and the Pacemakers (Columbia)
2	3	HIPPY HIPPY SHAKE	Swinging Blue Jeans (HMV)
14	4	DIANE	Bachelors (Decca)
3	5	GLAD ALL OVER	Dave Clerk Five (Columbia)
10	6	5-4-3-2-1	Manfred Mann (HMV)
10	7	AS USUAL	Brenda Lee (Brunswick)
5	8	TWENTY-FOUR HOURS FROM TULSA	Gene Pitney (United Artists)
8	9	DON'T BLAME ME	Frank Ifield (Columbia)
6	10	I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND	Beatles (Parlophone)

CHARTS



SINGLES

Week ending February 3, 1979

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(1)	HIT ME WITH YOUR RHYTHM STICK	Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	7	1
2	(2)	Y.M.C.A.	Village People (Mercury)	9	1
3	(25)	HEART OF GLASS	Blondie (Chrysalis)	2	3
4	(3)	SEPTEMBER	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	6	3
5	(11)	WOMAN IN LOVE	Three Degrees (Ariola)	2	5
6	(4)	A LITTLE MORE LOVE	Olivia Newton-John (EMI)	6	4
7	(19)	DON'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA	Shadows (EMI)	2	7
8	(5)	HELLO THIS IS JOANIE	Paul Evans (Spring)	5	5
9	(8)	CAR 67	Driver 67 (Logo)	3	8
10	(7)	LE FREAK	Chic (Atlantic)	10	5
11	(6)	LAY YOUR LOVE ON ME	Racey (RAK)	8	3
12	(12)	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	Barry White (20th Century)	4	12
13	(18)	MY LIFE	Billy Joel (CBS)	6	13
14	(15)	RAMA LAMA DING DONG	Rocky Sharpe & The Replays (Chiswick)	3	14
15	(9)	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE	Funkadelic (Warner Bros)	8	11
16	(23)	YOU NEEDED ME	Anne Murray (Capitol)	4	16
17	(13)	I'M EVERY WOMAN	Chaka Khan (Warner Bros)	8	11
17	(20)	THIS IS IT	Dan Hartman (Blue Sky)	3	17
19	(22)	TAKE THAT TO THE BANK	Shalamar (RCA)	3	19
20	(10)	SONG FOR GUY	Elton John (Rocket)	8	2
21	(16)	I'LL PUT YOU TOGETHER AGAIN	Hot Chocolate (Rak)	8	13
22	(14)	MIRRORS	Sally Oldfield (Bronze)	6	14
23	(—)	MILK AND ALCOHOL	Dr Feelgood (United Artists)	1	23
24	(17)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN	Bee Gees (RSO)	9	4
25	(—)	COULD IT BE MAGIC	Barry Manilow (Arista)	1	25
26	(24)	COOL MEDITATION	Third World (Island)	3	24
27	(—)	I WAS MADE FOR DANCIN'	Leif Garrett (Atlantic)	1	27
28	(—)	KING ROCKER	Generation X (Chrysalis)	1	28
29	(—)	WE'VE GOT TONITE	Bob Seger (Capitol)	1	29
30	(—)	SIRDANCEALOT	Olympic Runners (Polydor)	1	30

BUBBLING UNDER . . .

DANCE (Disco Heat) — Sylvester (Fantasy); CONTACT — Edwin Starr (20th Century); WHEN I'M AWAY FROM YOU — Frankie Miller (Chrysalis).

ALBUMS

Week ending February 3, 1979

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(1)	DON'T WALK, BOOGIE	Various (EMI)	5	1
2	(5)	PARALLEL LINES	Blondie (Chrysalis)	16	2
3	(4)	SHOWADDYWADDY'S GREATEST HITS 1976-1978	(Arista)	8	1
4	(7)	ARMED FORCES	Elvis Costello (Radar)	3	4
5	(2)	THE SINGLES 1974-1978	Carpenters (A&M)	8	2
6	(6)	ACTION REPLAY	Various (K-Tel)	3	6
7	(14)	EQUINOXE	Jean Michel Jarre (Polydor)	6	7
8	(10)	GREASE	Original Soundtrack (RSO)	29	1
9	(19)	NEW BOOTS & PANTIES	Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	37	5
10	(8)	A SINGLE MAN	Elton John (Rocket)	13	5
11	(17)	TONIC FOR THE TROOPS	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	24	4
12	(3)	WINGS GREATEST	Wings (Parlophone)	6	3
12	(12)	NIGHT FLIGHT TO VENUS	Boney M (Int Hansa)	28	1
14	(11)	THE BEST OF EARTH WIND AND FIRE VOL 1	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	4	11
15	(25)	EVEN NOW	Barry Manilow (Arista)	3	15
16	(8)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN	Rod Stewart (Riva)	9	2
17	(26)	INCANTATIONS	Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	6	14
18	(20)	20 GOLDEN GREATS	Doris Day (Warwick)	3	18
19	(16)	WAR OF THE WORLDS	Jeff Wayne (CBS)	30	2
20	(—)	CRUISIN'	Village People (Mercury)	1	20
21	(23)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Neil Diamond (CBS)	4	14
22	(24)	EMOTIONS	Various (K-Tel)	13	2
23	(15)	NEIL DIAMOND'S 20 GOLDEN GREATS	Neil Diamond (MCA)	11	1
24	(—)	52nd STREET	Billy Joel (CBS)	2	24
25	(—)	BAT OUT OF HELL	Meatloaf (Epic)	31	6
26	(—)	THE AMAZING DARTS	Darts (Magnet)	11	7
27	(18)	OUT OF THE BLUE	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	56	3
28	(21)	GIVE 'EM ENOUGH ROPE	Clash (CBS)	10	3
29	(—)	TOTALLY HOT	Olivia Newton John (EMI)	2	29
30	(13)	MIDNIGHT HUSTLE	Various (K-Tel)	9	3

BUBBLING UNDER . . .

THREE LIGHT YEARS — Electric Light Orchestra (Jet); GHOST RIDERS IN THE SKY — Slim Whitman (United Artists).

U.S. SINGLES

Week ending February 3, 1979

This Week	Last Week		
1	(4)	DO YA THINK I'M SEXY	Rod Stewart
2	(1)	LE FREAK	Chic
3	(3)	Y.M.C.A.	Village People
4	(2)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN	Bee Gees
5	(10)	FIRE	Pointer Sisters
6	(8)	A LITTLE MORE LOVE	Olivia Newton-John
7	(9)	EVERY 1's A WINNER	Hot Chocolate
8	(6)	SEPTEMBER	Earth, Wind & Fire
9	(12)	LOTTA LOVE	Nicolette Larson
10	(13)	GOT TO BE REAL	Cheryl Lynn
11	(5)	HOLD THE LINE	Toto
12	(16)	SOUL MAN	Blues Brothers
13	(15)	SHAKE IT	Ian Matthews
14	(11)	MY LIFE	Billy Joel
15	(20)	SOMEWHERE IN THE NIGHT	Barry Manilow
16	(17)	NEW YORK GROOVE	Ace Frehley
17	(19)	I WAS MADE FOR DANCIN'	Leif Garrett
18	(7)	OOH BABY BABY	Linda Ronstadt
19	(23)	DON'T CRY OUT LOUD	Melisa Manchester
20	(21)	DON'T HOLD BACK	Chanson
21	(25)	THE GAMBLER	Kenny Rogers
22	(—)	HEAVEN KNOWS	Donna Summer
23	(24)	HOME AND DRY	Gerry Rafferty
24	(28)	BLUE MORNING, BLUE DAY	Foreigner
25	(30)	NO TELL LOVER	Chicago
26	(—)	I WILL SURVIVE	Gloria Gainer
27	(27)	SHATTERED	Rolling Stones
28	(—)	SHAKE YOUR GROOVE THING	Peaches and Herb
29	(29)	LOVE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE	Rose Royce
30	(—)	DARLIN' SHOES	Nigel Olsen

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

U.S. ALBUMS

Week ending February 3, 1979

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	BRIEFCASE FULL OF BLUES	Blues Brothers
2	(4)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN	Rod Stewart
3	(2)	52nd STREET	Billy Joel
4	(3)	BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL. 2	
5	(5)	GREATEST HITS	Barry Manilow
6	(6)	A WILD & CRAZY GUY	Steve Martin
7	(8)	THE BEST OF EARTH, WIND & FIRE VOL. 1	
8	(9)	C'EST CHIC	Chic
9	(13)	TOTALLY HOT	Olivia Newton-John
10	(11)	TOTO	Toto
11	(7)	GREASE	Various Artists
12	(12)	DOUBLE VISION	Foreigner
13	(14)	CRUISIN'	Village People
14	(10)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Neil Diamond
15	(15)	BACKLESS	Eric Clapton
16	(20)	MINUTE BY MINUTE	Doobie Brothers
17	(18)	MOTOR BOOTY AFFAIR	Parliament
18	(16)	LIVING IN THE USA	Linda Ronstadt
19	(19)	LIVE AND MORE	Donna Summer
20	(24)	NICOLETTE	Nicolette Larson
21	(21)	SOME GIRLS	Rolling Stones
22	(23)	PIECES OF EIGHT	Styx
23	(17)	JAZZ	Queen
24	(26)	DOG & BUTTERFLY	Heart
25	(27)	BACK TO EARTH	Cat Stevens
26	(22)	GREATEST HITS 1974-1978	Steve Miller Band
27	(—)	HERE MY DEAR	Marvin Gaye
28	(28)	THE STRANGER	Billy Joel
29	(30)	STRANGER IN TOWN	Aerosmith
30	(—)	CROSSWINDS	Peabo Bryson

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

SUNDAY SPECIALS AT LYCEUM

999, Gen X, Bo Diddley, Motorhead — and more

LONDON's Lyceum Ballroom in the Strand begins a new series of Sunday-night rock concerts in a fortnight's time — with 999, Generation X, Bo Diddley and Motorhead already confirmed for headlining dates. The Sunday shows are now under the aegis of a different promoter, Straight Music (previously associated with Sunday rock at the Roundhouse), who will initially be staging gigs there for 16 weeks — with the likelihood of an indefinite run.

A spokesman explained: "With the demise of the Roundhouse due to sound problems, we moved into the Electric Ballroom. We shall still be promoting there occasionally, but from now on we're concentrating all our big guns on the Lyceum."

Opening night is February 18, with 999 topping, supported by The Members. Generatiion X star on February 25. R'n'B veteran Bo Diddley is set for March 18, with rockabilly star Ray Campi as special guest. The March 25 bill features a package of up-and-coming bands — including Gang Of Four, Stiff Little Fingers, The Mekons and The Cure — regarded by Straight as "tips for the top". Motorhead are booked for April 1, and among other acts being lined up for headlining appearances are The Pop Group and Penetration.

Other names have still to be added to the bills already announced, because there will be a minimum of three bands in every show. Admission will be a standard £2.50 throughout the series, and the gigs run from 7 to 11pm.

● Gen X's concert is the final date of their "Valley Of The Dolls" tour which, as already reported, opens at Malvern Winter Gardens on February 9. And there's a change in their itinerary two days earlier, on February 23, when they now play Bath Pavilion instead of Manchester Mayflower.

● Motorhead's show on April 1 will be the highlight of a major tour they are undertaking, starting in March and including dates at big Manchester and Glasgow venues. It ties in with the March 9 release of their new Bronze album, produced by Jimmy Miller, which is preceded on February 16 by their new single "Overkill".

● Bo Diddley may play one or two other selected dates during his March visit, but no details are yet available.

Hot Rods on rampage

THE FIRST 22 dates in the major 1979 tour by Eddie & The Hot Rods were revealed to NME this week. It's the first time they've been on the road since their "Life On The Line" tour last spring, when they were joined by Radio Stars and Squeeze. This latest outing coincides with the March 9 release of their new Island album "Thriller", produced by Peter Ker and featuring guest musicians Lee Brilleaux (of The Feelgoods) and Jools Holland (of Squeeze) — so it's logical to suppose that this will be billed as their "Thriller Tour"!

Prior to the opening of the itinerary proper, the band play four warm-up gigs later this month — at Bath Univeristy (February 22), Reading University (23), Hull Univeristy (24), and Redcar Coatham Bowl (25). The tour officially opens at Liverpool Univeristy on March 9, followed by Glasgow Strathclyde University (10), Coventry Locarno (15), Leicester Polytechnic (16), Edinburgh Odeon (17), Newcastle City Hall (20), Leeds Polytechnic (21 and 22), Sheffield Top Rank (23), Manchester Apollo (24), Birmingham Town Hall (25), Guildford Civic Hall (26), Portsmouth Locarno (27), Brighton Top Rank (28), Hemel Hempstead Pavilion (29), London Rainbow Theatre (30), Cardiff Top Rank (April 1) and Bristol Locarno (2).

As reported last week, the full tour schedule is expected to take in around three dozen gigs, which means that a number have still to be finalised — both on interim dates in the above list, and subsequently through to mid-April. After their British commitments, the Hot Rods leave for an extensive European tour, and they are being lined up for a U.S. visit later in the year.

BARRIE MASTERS of the Hot Rods

Radio Stars hitting the trail

ANDY ELLISON of Radio Stars

RADIO STARS are back on the tour circuit, playing 19 dates from this week to mid-March. They'll be promoting their newly released Chiswick Records single "The Real Me", a re-mixed version of a track from their latest LP "Holiday Album". The gigs also mark the return to the line-up of drummer Steve Parrot, who re-joins them for the full tour. And Martin Gordon expects to have recovered completely from a spell in hospital, where he underwent a severe dental operation, in time for the opening at Wolverhampton Polytechnic tomorrow (Friday).

Other dates are Farnborough Technical College (this Saturday), London Camden Music Machine (February 6), Newport Stowaway Club (7), Reading University (9), Hull University (10), Newport Village Club (16), Northampton County Ground (17), Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic (23), Sunderland Polytechnic (24), Cambridge University (26), Southampton Univeristy (28), Doncaster Bircotes Sports Centre (March 2), Manchester Polytechnic (3), Middlesbrough Crypt Club (4), Birmingham Barbarella's (6), Luton Technical College (9), London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (10) and London Marquee Club (13).

NEWS

by Derek Johnson

Hancock, EW&F, Hillage:new gigs

HERBIE HANCOCK has added another four dates to his British tour, reported three weeks ago. They include a second London concert at the Hammersmith Odeon on February 24 (tickets £4, £3 and £2), which has been slotted in because his gig at the Rainbow on February 16 is completely sold out.

The other three extra shows are at Dunstable California (February 17, tickets £3.50), Edinburgh Odeon (20 — admission £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2) and Brighton Top Rank (23, tickets £2.50). As already announced, he's backed by his regular six-piece band (including well-known drummer Alphonse Mouzon), and his new album "Feets Don't Fail Me Now" is issued by CBS on February 9.

EARTH WIND & FIRE have added a second date at Stafford Bingley Hall to their brief UK visit next month. It's on Thursday, March 1, which means that it now becomes their opening performance — the others being at Stafford (2) and London Wembley Arena (3 and 4). Tickets for this extra gig are all priced £4, and they go on sale today (Thursday) at usual agents in Stoke, Birmingham and Manchester. There is, apparently, no chance of any more Wembley gigs being added.

HERBIE HANCOCK

STEVE HILLAGE has added four more dates to his UK tour reported two weeks ago, tied in with the release of his Virgin live double album "Live Herald". They are at Liverpool Mountford Hall (February 26), Leicester De Montfort Hall (27), Oxford New Theatre (28) and Exeter University (March 1).

KEVIN COYNE, already set for a major London concert at the Royalty Theatre in Kingsway on March 18, precedes this show with four newly-confirmed provincial gigs. They are at Newcastle University (February 9), Derby Penine Hotel (11), Huddersfield Polytechnic (13) and Manchester University (16).

Wire on circuit!

WIRE are playing a series of dates during the next two months, to give an added boost to their recently released Harvest single "Outdoor Miner", which already seems a potential chart entry. Venues confirmed so far are Barnstaple Queen's Hall (February 19), Plymouth Metro (20), Newport Stowaway Club (21), Birmingham Barbarella's (22), Manchester The Factory (23), Liverpool Eric's (24), Scarborough Penthouse (March 2) and Sheffield University (3), with more currently being finalised.

LENE LOVICH has made a few changes in her U.K. tour itinerary, reported last week. Fife St Andrew's University (February 11) is cancelled, but three new gigs are added — Middlesbrough Rock Garden (February 13), London Regent's Park Bedford College (16) and Birmingham Barbarella's (18). For the benefit of the uninitiated, Stiff Records have asked us to point out that her name is pronounced Layna Luvitch.

THE D.P.'s, the Brighton-based band who last year shortened their name from The Depressions in an effort to attract more interest, have now accepted that the move didn't work. So they've just announced that they've decided to split up with immediate effect.

SIOUXSIE And The Banshees are off to Europe this weekend to headline a string of major concerts, opening in Hamburg on Saturday. A new single from the band is due out shortly.

SHAM 69 have been playing a few low-key gigs during the past week, the last being at Derby King's Hall tonight (Thursday). They've just brought keyboards player Tot Taylor into the line-up from Advertising, and the object of the gigs is to assess the band's sound with an added pianist. Taylor's involvement with Sham is initially for a limited period only, to see how things work out.

DOLL BY DOLL have their debut single "The Palace Of Love" issued on February 23, as the initial product under their newly-signed deal with the Automatic Record Company (distributed by WEA). They preview it at York Revolution (tonight, Thursday), Nottingham Sandpiper (Friday), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (Saturday), Leeds Fforde Green Hotel (Sunday), Birmingham Barbarella's (February 6), London Marquee (7), Sheffield Limit Club (9) and Dudley J.B.'s (10). It's likely that more gigs will be added to this list.

NEWS WAVES

THE LEYTON BUZZARDS, newly-signed by Chrysalis, have their debut single out this weekend titled "Saturday Night Beneath The Plastic Palm Trees". They promote it at London Stoke Newington Pegasus (this Sunday), York Pop Club (February 5), Liverpool Eric's (8) and London Walthamstow North-East Polytechnic (17).

THE V.I.P.'s, whose second single "Just Can't Let You Go" is released on February 23 by Rok Records (distributed through The Label), have London dates this month at Harrow Technical College (tomorrow, Friday), Chelsea Wheatsheaf (every Saturday), Camden Music Machine with Little Bo Bitch (14), Fulham Greyhound (16), Marquee Club with Little Bo Bitch (25) and Woolwich Tramshed (27).

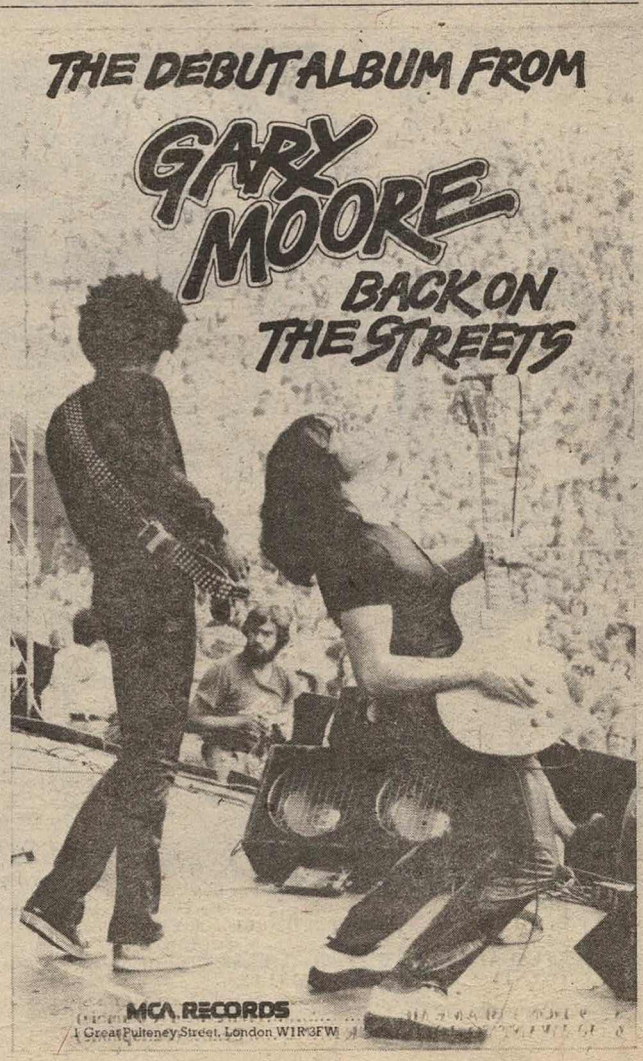
THE EDGE have lined up three London gigs later this month — at Covent Garden Rock Garden (15), Kensington Nashville (17) and Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle (23).

ADAM & THE ANTS have extra gigs at Nottingham Sandpiper (February 16), Bradford Royal Standard (18) and Chester Smartyz (19).

Punishment inflict more

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY, newly signed by United Artists (as reported two weeks ago), have added more dates to their current tour — at Northampton County Ground (this Saturday), Sheffield Limit (February 8), Norwich East Anglia University (9), London Marquee (13), Cardiff Grannies (15), London City Polytechnic (16), Coventry Warwick University (17), London Imperial College (18), Aberystwyth University (20), Gt. Yarmouth Star & Garter (22), Burton 76 Club (23), Derby Lonsdale College (24) and York Pop Club (28).

THE BUZZCOCKS are embarking on a series of solo projects, prior to their European tour starting in March, reported last week. Drummer John Maher is currently recording with Patrik Fitzgerald for the latter's debut album, and both Pete Shelley and bassist Steve Garvey have upcoming solo singles. Shelley has also recorded a solo session on acoustic guitar for Manchester's Piccadilly Radio.



Who do Gruppo Sportivo think they are?
Since Gruppo Sportivo first appeared in a British music paper about a year ago, they've been compared with ABBA, AC/DC, Albertos, HERB ALPERT, Beach Boys, B. Bumble and the Stingers, Blondie, BONZO DOG DOO DAH BAND, Hoagy CARMICHAEL, Cheaptrick, Eddy COCHRAN, Deaf School, IAN DURY, Marlene Dietrich, THE DOOLEYS, Duane Eddy, LEWIS FUREY, Gary Glitter, DAN HICKS, Bob Marley, MEATLOAF, MRS. MILLS, The Monkees, Tom Petty, Shangri Las, DEL SHANNON, Searchers, SHADOWS, Tornadoes, VENTURES, XTC and Frank ZAPPA.
Yet their sound is still exclusively Gruppo Sportivo.
Find out for yourself. Listen to the unique sound of their great new album.
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Epic
Record & Cassette
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'Back to 78 Tour' in the UK
February
6 Leicester, University
7 Preston, Polytechnic
8 Wakefield, Unity Hall
9 Bristol, University
10 Birmingham, University
13 Plymouth, Metro
14 Southampton, University
15 Warwick, University
16 Sheffield, Polytechnic
17 Manchester, University
20 Birmingham, Barbarellas.
21 Liverpool, University
22 Middlesbrough, Crypt
23 Newcastle, Polytechnic
24 Strathclyde, University
25 St. Andrews, University
26 Edinburgh, Tiffanys
28 Bradford, University
March
1 Leeds, Polytechnic
Gruppo Sportivo
'Back to 78'
featuring the single 'PS78'
AGENCY REPRESENTATION – ASGARD

SEDAKA IN PALLADIUM SEASON

Stylistics' long tour

THE STYLISTICS return to Britain in April for an extensive seven-week tour, comprising both concerts and cabaret engagements. Their itinerary includes two major London dates — at the Palladium on April 29 at 6 and 8.30pm (tickets on sale now at the box office priced £6, £5, £3.50 and £2.50); and at the Hammersmith Odeon on May 19 at 6 and 8.45pm (tickets on sale shortly priced £5, £4, £3 and £2).

Other confirmed dates are at Stoke Jollees (April 23 week), Birmingham Night Out (30 week), Manchester Golden Garter (May 7 week), Oxford New Theatre (13), Windsor Blazers (20 week), return to Birmingham Night Out (28 week), Purfleet Circus Tavern (June 3 week) and Brighton Centre (10). Two other big concerts have still to be finalised by promoter Danny Betesh of Kennedy Street Enterprises. Prior to the tour, the group guest in BBC-1's "Saturday Night At The Mill" on April 21, and other TV appearances are being lined up.

NEIL SEDAKA flies into London in the spring to play a seven-day engagement at the Palladium — from Sunday to Saturday, April 22-28 inclusive. Ticket prices were still being finalised at press-time, though it's understood that the box office will be opening shortly, possibly next week. Sedaka won't be playing any other concerts during his visit, though he is appearing on TV, including his own special.

● Paul Anka is also confirmed for a Palladium season, playing a week there from Monday to Saturday, April 2-7 inclusive.

ERIC STEWART IS 'IMPROVING'

ERIC STEWART of 10c.c. is recovering in Redhill Hospital from the serious car accident in which he was involved last Thursday. He sustained a skull fracture when his sports car somersaulted off the road in icy conditions at Reigate. A spokesman said at presstime: "Fortunately it's not a bad skull fracture, and Eric continues to improve all the time. Only yesterday he was expressing the hope he'd be fit for the band's projected Far East tour in March". Even so, a question mark hangs over the tour until later this week, when Stewart will be told by a specialist when he can resume work.

News Briefs

MEATLOAF is now confirmed for a second British tour later in the spring, probably in May. No venue details yet available.

PETER STRAKER plays the role of Narrator, Pete Townshend's original part, in the new production of "Tommy" opening in London next week.

NATIONAL HEALTH are being lined up for a series of gigs later this month, when they'll be augmented by Alan Gowen of Gilgamesh.

KOKOMO headline at London's newest showplace, The Venue in Victoria, this Sunday (4) with special guests Sniff & The Tears.

GEORGIE FAME & The Blue Flames return to London Ronnie Scott's Club for a two-week engagement, starting March 5.

JASPER CARROTT has a one-off at London Drury Lane Theatre Royal on February 18, supported by Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators. It's being filmed for a London Weekend TV special.

OSIBISA have added a major London date to their UK concert series announced a fortnight ago — at The Venue in Victoria on February 10.

FINGERPRINTZ, the band recently signed by Virgin, are supporting Lene Lovich on her UK tour — starting in Aberdeen on February 9.

ALBANY EMPIRE in London's Deptford stages a benefit tonight (Thursday) with The Realists and The Red Lights, and another on February 8 with Pressure Shocks, UK Subs and The Monitors.

SPUD are being lined up for a UK tour starting February 23. First dates set for the Irish band are Brighton Polytechnic (March 1) and Newport Harper Adams College (2).

CHEAP TRICK, who were forced by bad weather to call off their show at Oxford Polytechnic last Friday, have now re-set the gig for February 8.

SLADE begin another cabaret and one-nighter tour next month, opening with a week at Watford Bailey's from February 25. Nick van Eede supports.

SARAH BRIGHTMAN has left Hot Gossip to concentrate on a solo career, writing and recording. She'll have a new single out shortly.

BEE GEES are showcased in a one-hour Radio 1 special tomorrow (Friday) at 9am, including Paul Gambaccini interviews with the Gibb brothers.

MIKE BERRY talks about Buddy Holly on the 20th anniversary of his death, and sings some of his numbers, in ITV's networked "Magpie" Tuesday (February 6).

GRAHAM PARKER & The Rumour now play two Irish gigs immediately before their UK tour reported last week — at Belfast Whitla Hall (February 25) and Dublin Olympia (26).

Latest tours round-up

LIVE ON STAGE

BOYS OF THE LOUGH are back on the road this month with gigs at Oxford Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), Loughborough University (Sunday), Livingston Howden Park Centre (9), Newcastle Playhouse (11), Motherwell Civic Centre (14), Hatfield Forum (16), Preston Charter Theatre (17), London Woolwich Tramshed (18) and Cardiff Sherman Theatre (25).

SWINGLE II play nine concerts this month, to tie in with the release of their new CBS album "No Time To Talk". They're at Derby Assembly Rooms (this Sunday), York University (9), Cardiff New Theatre (11), Stirling University (15), Inverness Eden Court Theatre (16), Glasgow City Hall (18), Manchester Royal Northern College of Music (20), Grimsby Western School (21) and Eastbourne Congress (23).

IMMIGRANT have London gigs lined up at Ronnie Scott's Club Upstairs (this Friday and Saturday), Camden Dingwalls (February 7), City Polytechnic (9), Camden Town Hall (10) and Hackney All Nations Club (17). They also have out-of-town dates at Sheffield Limit Club (February 28) and Lincoln A.J.'s (March 17).

ROD ARGENT's backing band for his two nights at London Victoria The Venue on Febuary 8 and 9 comprises Peter Robinson (of Brand X and Stanley Clarke) and Rob Lumley (producer of Brand X) both on keyboards, guitarist John Goodsall (Brand X), bassist Alphonso Johnson (Weather Report), drummer Phil Collins (Genesis) and percussionist Morris Pert (Brand X), with Argent himself on lead vocals and keyboards.

SUPERCHARGE have added more dates to their latest gig series, reported last week — at Wakefield Unity Hall (February 16), Loughborough University (24), Wolverhampton Lafayette (March 2), Birmingham Barbarella's (3), Newcastle Polytechnic (7), Bradford University (9), Coventry Warwick University (15), Northampton College (17) and Nottingham College of Agriculture (20).

THE HEAD BOYS, reported last week as having signed for RSO Records, play Edinburgh St. Mary's School (tomorrow, Friday), Kinghorn Cuinzie Nuik (Sunday), Paisley The Bungalow (February 7), Edinburgh Astoria (8), Greenock Victoria Carriage (9), Sheffield Limit (13) and London gigs at Camden Brecknock (14), Fulham Golden Lion (15), Camden Dingwalls (16) and Covent Garden Rock Garden (18).

SON SEALS BAND have now re-arranged their British visit originally planned for the autumn, but called off after they were involved in a serious train crash in Scandinavia. First confirmed dates are at Newcastle Polytechnic (March 16), Leicester University (17), Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic (22) and London Hendon Middlesex Polytechnic (23), with more to be added.

CHAS & DAVE go on the road to promote their current EMI album "Rockney" and upcoming live LP (see Record News). They play Sheffield University (this Saturday), Portsmouth Polytechnic (February 15), Brighton Polytechnic (17), Chatham Town Hall (21), Leicester University (22), Manchester Polytechnic (23), Wolverhampton Lafayette (March 9), Retford Porterhouse (10), Canterbury Kent University (13) and Birmingham Barbarella's (16).

THE YOUNG BUCKS have London gigs this month at City Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), Kensington Nashville (every Monday), Chelsea College (10), New Cross Goldsmiths College (14), Whitelands College (16) and Paddington St. Mary's Hospital (17). Out of town they play Portsmouth Polytechnic (this Saturday), Uxbridge Brunel University (Sunday), Bristol Granary (8), Birmingham Barbarella's (9), Sheffield Limit Club (23) and Newcastle University (24).

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, now with new drummer Jim Reilly, headline Rough Trade's package tour tour this month also featuring Essential Logic and Robert Rental & The Normal. Dates are Bournemouth Town Hall (tomorrow, Friday), Aylesbury Friars (Saturday), Swindon Brunel Rooms (5), London W.10 Acklam Hall (7), Cardiff Grannies (8), Plymouth Metro (9), Davidstow Village Hall (10), Newport Stowaway Club (14), Cheltenham Plough (15), Manchester Factory (16), Liverpool Eric's (17), York Pop Club (21), Derby Ajanta Cinema (22), Nottingham University (23), Leeds Polytechnic (24) and Rugby (26).

STEVE GIBBONS BAND are being lined up for a series of gigs starting later this month. Details are still being finalised, but unconfirmed dates include Keele University (February 14), Manchester Mayflower (15), Birmingham Aston University (16) and London City Polytechnic (17), all supported by Straight 8.

Journey to U.K.

AMERICAN band Journey have now confirmed details of their British visit in March, when they'll be supported by the Pat Travers Band. The tour ties in with the release of Journey's new CBS album on March 9, the follow-up to their Platinum LP "Infinity", and their first to feature new drummer Steve Smith (ex Jean-Luc Ponty).

Highlight of their intinery is a major concert at the Hammersmith Odeon on March 26, and other dates are Manchester Apollo (21), Glasgow Apollo (22), Newcastle Mayfair (23), Sheffield City Hall (24), Leicester De Montfort Hall (27) and Birmingham Odeon (28).

OVERTURES BY TCHAIKOVSKY!

BRAM TCHAIKOVSKY — the former Motors guitarist who last year launched his own band Battleaxe, now known simply by his own name — is the subject of a major launch campaign by Radar Records (distributed by WEA), which gets under way this month.

First step in the programme is the release on February 16 of their first single "Girl Of My Dreams" and, as a special image booster, the first 10,000 copies are marketed in a special gatefold sleeve — including an additional free live single, recorded last month during their Hammersmith Odeon concert with Rory Gallagher. They have also just completed work on their debut album, titled "Strange Man, Changed Man", which is due out on March 9.

The outfit flew to Scandinavia this week to open a major concert tour tonight (Thursday), taking in ten top venues. And they'll be setting out on their most important British tour to date on March 15, with details to be announced in a week or two.

Pegasus: a boost for new artists

THE PEGASUS in Stoke Newington, one of London's leading pub rock venues, starts operating a new policy this month. There'll be a 1.5-kilowatt P.A. available to all bands and a resident sound engineer present, so giving new bands a chance to play at a London venue with a decent system. Mondays and Wednesdays will be free entry nights, with two new bands having the chance to build up a following, which could lead to a Tuesday residency the following month. Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays will feature more established bands, with Big Chief continuing their Saturday residency. Any bands interested should contact the venue direct.

BRISTOLS GO LIMP!

BE LIMP is the name given to a package tour featuring several up-and-coming acts from the Bristol area — The Spics, Joe Public, Crystal Theatre, Dave Cohen, Candado Palado, Les Vraiment Cool and Einstein's Brain. It's being promoted by the Bristol University Students Union as part of what they call their 'Rock Against Radio Wavelength Changes' campaign. Admission to gigs will be around 75p, and the first confirmed are at Southampton University (this Saturday), Bristol Brunel Technical College (February 11), Reading University (23), London School of Economics (24), Guildford Surrey University (March 2), Birmingham Polytechnic (9), Oxford College of Further Education (10) and Bristol University (16).

Smirks conflict with Beserkley

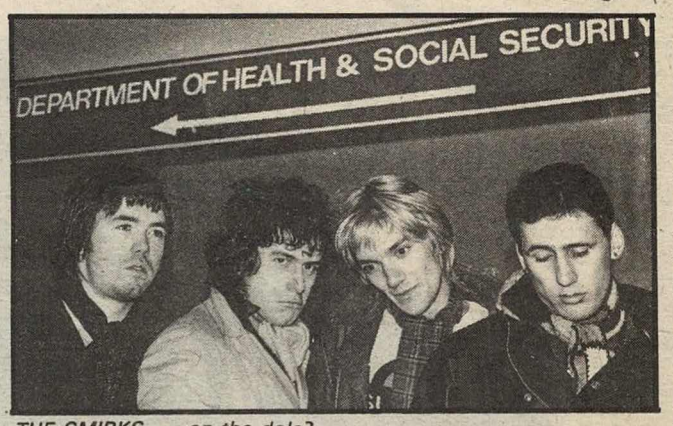
A MYSTERY concerning the recording career of The Smirks and the future of the Beserkley label remained unsolved at press-time, due to conflicting statements from the two parties involved.

A spokesman for the Manchester-based band said they have ceased to have any connection with Beserkley, who had advised them to look for another deal. And this is particularly upsetting to them, because they've virtually finished work on a new album, which can't now now be released. It's being shelved until they find a new label. The Smirks claim that Mathew Kaufman, head of Beserkley USA, told them he'd decided to wind down operations in Britain.

But a Beserkley spokesman in London denied that The Smirks had been given the boot. He said that managing director Fred Cantrell resigned last week and, in the light of this, The Smirks had been given the opportunity of deciding how they felt about remaining with the label.

He added: "There will be inevitable changes, resulting in an increased emphasis on our American acts — including The Rubinoos, Greg Kihn and Jonathan Richman". But he declined to say how the other British act on the label, The Tyla Gang, would be affected.

Despite this setback, The Smirks are going ahead with a March tour, which was originally intended to promote their new album. Confirmed dates are Liverpool Eric's (March 1), Retford Porterhouse (2), Bristol Polytechnic (6), Plymouth Woods Centre (7), Exeter Routes (8), Norwich Boogie House (10), Leicester University (12), Birmingham University (13), York Revolution (14), Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic (15), Scarborough Penthouse (16), Salford University (17), Leeds Fforde Green Hotel (18), Preston Polytechnic (21), Sheffield Limit Club (22) and London Marquee (23).



THE SMIRKS . . . on the dole?

RECORD NEWS

● Produced by Jerry Goldstein in Los Angeles, **Tanya Tucker's** new album "TNT" is released by MCA on February 9, with a single taken from it "Lover Goodbye" issued the following week (16).

● As a prelude to his upcoming tour, the title track from **Slim Whitman's** current album "Ghost Riders In The Sky" is released as a United Artists single on February 9.

Motown supersingle

● Four of the world's most celebrated black stars combine forces on a Motown single for February 9 release. It's "Pops, We Love You" featuring **Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye** and **Smokie Robinson**. The song was written as a tribute to Motown founder Berry Gordy Snr, who died recently aged 90.

● Nottingham band **Gaffa** have their first album "Neither Use Nor Ornament" out on their own Gaffa 'n'Products label. It's available at their gigs or by post (details from 0602 294919).

● **The Soft Boys** have parted company with Radar Records, and will be releasing their new LP "The Day They Ate Brick" on their own Two Crabs label in late March. They'll be promoting it by playing a series of gigs at the same time.

● Latest reissue on Lightning Records' revival label Old Gold is **The Equals'** 1968 chart-topper "Baby Come Back", out this week. Two of their other former big hits will follow later in the year.

● **The Records** have been signed by Virgin, and are due in the studios this weekend to start work on their debut album . . . **The Flys,** currently touring Europe, have their new EMI single "Oh Beverley" out this weekend.

● **Chas & Dave** recorded a live album last week, in front of a specially invited audience at EMI's Abbey Road studios. It contains a batch of new self-penned material and is due for spring release.

● **Steel Pulse** are at present in the studios with producer Karl Pitterson, who was responsible for their hit album "Handsworth Revolution". Their new LP is be issued in mid-May, and the band will then start an extensive European and U.K. tour.

● **Sparks** have been signed by Virgin, and the first release under the deal is their album "No.1 In Heaven", which will be in the shops on March 2.

Harley tape strikebound

STEVE HARLEY spends this month and March in the EMI studios recording a new album with producer Jimmy Horowitz. He's having to duplicate some tracks, because a tape he recorded in the States is currently held up at Tilbury docks by the lorry drivers' strike. Backing him in the studio are ex-Cockney Rebel drummer Stuart Elliott, John Gibling (bass), Phil Palmer and Alan Murphy (guitars) and Joey Carbone (keyboards), though this line-up could well change when Harley goes on the road in the spring to coincide with the LP's release. Meanwhile, he has a new single out on February 16 titled "Someone's Coming".

● A limited edition picture disc of **Elvis Presley's** "A Legendary Performer — Vol. 3" with a portrait on one side and an action shot on the other, is now available priced £8.99. The normal pressing, also out on RCA, costs £4.49.

● Four compilation albums out on RCA, selling at the budget price of £2.49, are **Lou Reed's** "Vicious", "The Many Sides Of **Neil Sedaka**", **Nina Simone's** "Pure Gold" and **"Duane Eddy"**. And a new full-price release is "Hollywood Party Tonight" by **Odyssey**.

● "Hey Little Way Out Girl" by **Del Capris** has been picked up by Grapevine Records for release through RCA on March 9. It's reckoned to be Britain's most expensive single ever — there's believed to be only one copy in the country, which recently changed hands for £270.

● British band **Liar,** current touring with UFO, have their album "Set The World On Fire" released by Bearsville this weekend. It's the first commercial picture disc LP to be marketed by the WEA Organisation, and sells at the relatively low price (for this technique) of £5.99.

● **Lee Fardon & The Legionaires** have almost finished work on their debut album for Arista at the Rockfield Studios in Wales, with Fritz Fryer producing. The band will be doing a series of London dates later this month to preview the set.

ROD'S WRIT!

ROD STEWART issued a writ against WEA Records last Friday, in an attempt to prevent the company increasing the retail price of his "Blondes Have More Fun" album. According to a spokesman for Stewart, he had insisted on the LP being kept at the old price of £4.49, but last week WEA declared their intention of raising the price to £4.99 as from Monday of this week.

● **Mike Berry's** new Lightning Records single, out tomorrow (Friday), is a rare Buddy Holly song called "Stay Close To Me". Holly wrote it six months before his death 20 years ago, but never recorded it commercially. Chas & Dave and Crawler's Geoff Whitehorn are featured in the backing, with arrangements by ELO's Louis Clarke.

Parker LP set

GRAHAM PARKER & The Rumour's new album has now been named as "Squeezing Out Sparks", and it's set for March 2 release by Phonogram to tie in with the end of the next month. The ten-track set, recorded in London and mixed in Hollywood, was produced by Jack Nitzsche.

● **The Three Degrees'** current hit single "Woman In Love" is now available in a limited edition pressed on gold vinyl. This is one of seven current Ariola singles being pressed in gold, including recent releases by Deborah Washington, John Paul Young and Linda Fletcher.

● Just out on Cherry Red Records is the label's first album — "The Sleeper Wakes" by **Morgan,** retailing at £3.49 and also available as a cassette. The band features Morgan Fisher, formerly with Love Affair and Mott The Hoople, and now a member of British Lions.

● **Dan Kelleher,** formerly of the 101-er's, has a self-penned and self-produced single out on Chiswich titled "I Couldn't Help But Cry". Kelleher was co-writer with Joe Strummer of "Five-Star Rock-'n'Roll Petrol".

● **The Pop Group** are at present in the studios recording material, with a view to release later this month or in early March, at which time they'll be going on tour.

● Coventry new-wave band **Squad,** who have recently supported Sham 69 and The Flys, have just released their debut single on their own newly-formed Squad Songs label.

● Chrysalis say that the new **Blondie** single "Heart Of Glass" passed the 250,000 sales mark on Thursday of last week — less than a week after its release.

GUESS WHO!

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the new single from Elvis Costello and the Attractions Oliver's Army My Funny Valentine on Radar Records. Ada 31.

The Duck looked at Stan Lee

. . . And STAN said "Git!" STEVE GERBER got . . . HOWARD said

AND PHILIPPE GARNIER wrote it all down, giving an intriguing insight into the wild world of Marvel comics.

TRACKING DOWN Steve Gerber was surprisingly easy. I had heard he'd just been fired from Marvel and was in Burbank, California, licking his wounds, picking up the pieces, but most of all working on various new projects while the legal storm settled over the much-disputed ownership of one cigar-chomping, fowl-mouthed comic-book character named Howard.

Gerber and Howard's doom was something called FAME. A case of Too Much Too Soon. After hardly a year of existence, born out of *vox populi,* Howard had been turned into a syndicated comic-strip appearing every morning in hundreds of American newspapers.

This was an unprecedented feat. It had taken years for fellow traveller Spider Man to achieve that kind of status. Such meteoric success was all the more remarkable as Howard was not a superhero but a . . . duck. A talking duck catapulted into "A World He Never Made", a world of *hairless apes* through some damning twist of fate, a shuffling of *realities* so mindboggling and involved you really don't want to get into that.

There are webs and then there are webs: If Stan Lee almost single-handedly created the Marvel Olympus with *Captain America, Fantastic Four* and all that, he found in *Spider Man* his most lasting success — the first character to make it big outside of the Marvel padded-cell.

The Webman was directly followed by Web-foot himself, Howard, the thinking man's duck. And behind him of course stands the Web-brain, Gerber.

If it took Stan Lee quite a few years to create the Marvel Universe as it is now known, it took less for Gerber to completely subvert it. And this didn't start with the first ish of *Howard The Duck* either: Some of his stories for *Man-Thing* were even more outrageous and often more successful; as comic-books.

Steve Gerber was definitely the rising star at Marvel, with a rabid following of his own — so hot he couldn't be stopped. He started to take liberties that were a definite no-no for anyone else.

The transgressions of Marvel's *enfant terrible* are too numerous to list. He seemed to take a perverse pleasure in getting out of step; his stories showed a quasi iconoclastic and increasingly weary attitude towards Marvel and superheroes and the *de rigueur* big fight at the end. His dialogues and sense of language were almost always brilliant, with a lot of social satire, sexual double-entendre and an incredible ear for lingo, hip or not.

He also showed a marked propensity to indulge in Fellinesque capers such as the notorious Howard ish No16 in which he was really asking for trouble. Titled *Deadline Doom,* and subtitled *Azen And The Art Of Comic-Book Writing,* it managed to turn a prosaic technical snag into the most personal and wiggy statement a comics wirter has ever commited on paper (the pencils hadn't got back to Gerber in time for dialoguing that Dr Bong story, so Gerber, then on the lam and on his way to Las Vegas, wrote this very indulgent, very funny 17-pages of bleedin' *words* sloppily pasted over some very hasty and cheesy art summoned from 'a cast of thousands' specially drafted for the occasion.

It was crazy, but it was alive and kicking.

This wasn't the first time Gerber had put himself into his own stories (in fact the Howard stories were getting increasingly personal), but it was the first time he tested Marvel resistance (and also his readers' patience) in such a way. It was a total freak-out in the order of *Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas,* although Gerber seemed to lean more towards Harlan Ellison than Doctor Gonzo. A Man and his Duck?. Waaaugh!

Well, anyway, I got Gerber's number from the new listings, and sure enough, I heard Howard on the answering service; not *cackling,* exactly, but the voice on that tape was definitely fowl. Two hours later Gerber called back and we agreed to meet the next day for breakfast. Breakfast being at one pm, Las Vegas time.

GERBER CLAIMS he moved into the first apartment the real estate people showed him but his this hot-pink and black two-story building at the dead-end of a sleepy Burbank street lined with eucalyptus is almost too perfect. So perfectly tasteless, so . . . Californian. And right next to the Warner Bros fence, too.

He lives alone in one of the upstairs apartments, with with his dog and a rather vocal blind Siamese named Stupid (inherited from his ex-wife, he says).

We went to the coffee shop of a drugstore on nearby Olive Street, right in front of the Warner Gate, evoking visions of Peter Lorre or Sydney Greenstreet slouching in to buy Alka-seltzer and bloody marys before clocking in for the day. . .

How come, after trying Las Vegas, he'd picked Burbank of all places. Was it the perfect spot for a nervous breakdown? I joke.

"It's funny that you should mention this," Gerber laughs, "because in a way I *was* running from New York, running from some heavy emotional trouble. I just needed a *space,* and for a while Vegas was perfect; like, it's open all day and all night, which comes handy for a guy with my kind of hours. It had its advantages.

"In New York I know too many people, there are too many distractions, impossible to work. Vegas is this big *void,* no intellectual stimulation whatsoever . . ."

But that's also the reason he's not in Vegas anymore — not that Burbank is any better. He looks like he needs intellectual stimulation like others might need insulin. And he looks older than I imagined, kinder spoken. Somehow I expected an angry young man, or else some crusty misanthropist like his web-footed alter-ego.

Only later will I find that Howard is not so much an alter-ego as a demon.

Gerber dresses casual and sensible. A brown army shirt and brown corduroys. Heavy specs, but they look like he was born with them on. He acts serious and seems eager to explain things. Not aloof or spaced like you could expect from a man so obviously from the '60s.

I ask how he got to work for Marvel in the first place (although I could have just as well consulted the last issue of *Man-Thing,* a Pirandello mumber called *POP goes the COSMOS!,* where we see Steve in his Hell's Kitchen pad being visited by sorcerer Dakhim, and before that getting a call from editor Roy Thomas). He was in his home-town at the time, Saint Louis.

"That was in 1972, when Marvel was bought by Cadence Industries and really expanding. There were a lot of new books being created. Stan and Roy just could not keep up. So I worked in the office for six months, doing the chores, also writing stories; then I became a freelance writer for them: I worked on Submariner, Son of Satan, Fear, Man-Thing and a lot of others.

"Before that I was in advertising, doing radio and stuff, but I never could get enough *control.* Then I was a copywriter for a Saint Louis ad agency. Good money but I hated it.

"The last blow was when they gave me a product called WRINKLE-RID; to hype it was supposed to prevent your clothes from wrinkling, and I guess it did. Only trouble was it also made holes in your clothes. Lethal stuff! Or else you'd have big gloopy stains all over them.

"That's when I started to realise that my life was suffocating. So when Roy Thomas called I was ready to pack. We'd been Marvel pen-pals from way-back . . ."

Was it hard for him to impose his ideas at Marvel? Did he meet a lot of resistance when he came up with the duck?

"Well, it kind of sneaked up on them. There were so many books and new stories that it was impossible for the editors to keep a firm control over material. They let you pretty much alone as far as the story went.

"Anyway there was nothing they could do about it, because of the schedule and the hectic pace of production. You have to understand how things are done at Marvel; you'd be surprised! First the writer does the synopsis, as precise and detailed as can be. Then the artist does the pencils — he's the one who's supposed to tell the story.

"If the artist is good, if his story-telling is good, then the reader should be able to understand what's going on without the words.

"So when I get the pencils back to dialogue them, I don't waste space telling the story. I have room to be funny, original, er, *dense!* But sometimes the story-telling is awful and there's no room.

"Then you send back the stuff to be inked. So you see, there's no time at all for an editor to veto this or that. It's generally too late. And that's what happened with Howard, when Val Mayerick and I came up with this whacky idea for *Man-Thing* No 19. I wanted something wild, something off-the-wall, and Val drew this duck dressed like an accountant with a pork-pie hat and chewing on a stogie.

"When Roy saw this he said okay, cool, but don't do it again. They made me kill the duck, they wanted him eliminated because they though it would hurt the 'Marvel Image' or something. But by then I knew there was more to this duck than a one-shot ioke.

"So we killed the duck the Marvel way (dead without being really dead, like Dakhim the Sorcerer), and then this extraordinary thing happened: tons of angry mail, they all wanted the duck back. The Marvel offices even received a dead duck from Canada with a protest letter attached. And Stan Lee, who was doing a lot of lectures on the college circuit at the time, was given a hard time.

"He would come to the office and ask, 'What's the name of *our* duck, again?' (Laughs) So they let me carry on with the duck and pretty soon he had his own comic-book; and again, I was pretty much in charge, because nobody had any idea of where I wanted to go with it. In effect I was the editor too. Like we had Howard running for president against Ford and Carter and I even sold buttons, that sort of things . . ."

THERE WAS no censorship, then? I mean, Howard has a pretty problematic but also very obvious sexuality. Like, his relationship with Beverly Switzler is not exactly platonic. I mean, what about the *code*?

"Well, actually they made us redraw one pannel in an early issue. Howard and Bev were shown in the same bed, Howard naked and Bev in a short nightie. They made us put Howard *on* the sheets instead of *in-between.* But it was still pretty obvious what they did at night.

"In another ish we had Amy Pope bringing Howard up to her pad; it's when Howard has been turned into a human by Dr Bong — and

■ *Continues over page*

Requiem for a Duck

■ *From previous page*

we see Amy's sappy boyfriend Elton Burke pacing under her windows moaning. 'Why, they've been up there *all night!*' They thought it was lewdly suggestive and made us change it. I'm not kidding!"

You mean, The Rolling Stones died all in vain?

Gerber laughs. "Right! And anyway, nobody objected to Timmy sleeping with Lassie, that I know of . . ."

But what exactly is the nature of Howard's unnatural acts with Bev?

"I'd rather not think about it! That's why I left Howard's past pretty much in the clouds. We don't ever see where he comes from. We don't know. I think it's better that it remains a bit mysterious. It does not pay to be too literal."

We talk about the two kinds of stories he seems to favour: the mindboggling space operas with large doses of weirdness thrown in (he even used acid trips in one of his *Man-Thing* stories), and then the down-to-earth stories, almost soaps, but allowing him to do what he does best, social satire.

"Basically I like both kinds, and you know, I don't think there is much besides that. Comics are the ideal medium for those two kinds of stories. I don't think it works for all the other genres like westerns, war-stories or even detectives."

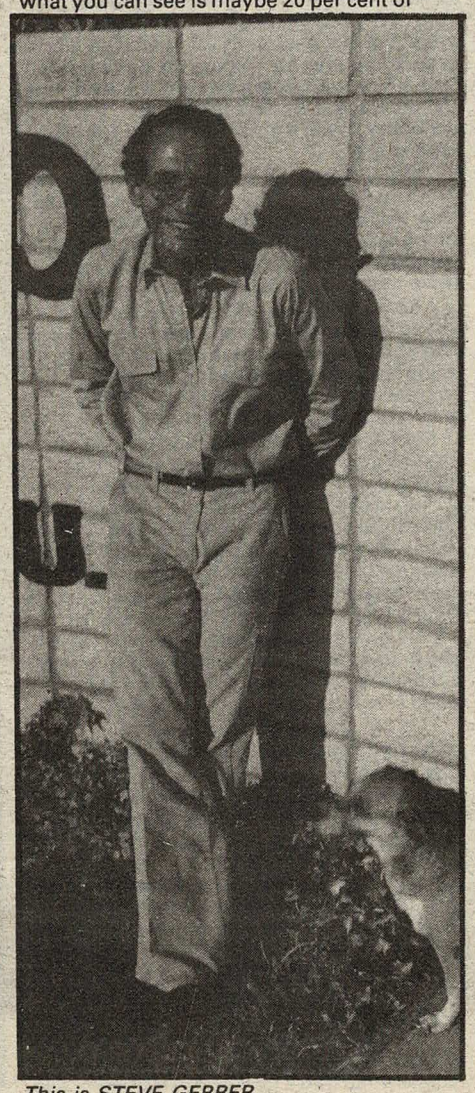
We discuss the various artists who collaborated with him on the different books — Brunner, Val Mayerik, Gene Colan (not to forget one Rico Rival!)

"They gave *Howard The Duck* No. 1 to Fink (Brunner) because they thought Val's style wasn't realistic enough or something. I don't understand it, but then Brunner was good too in a different way. To me the best artist was always Gene Colan, because he's the one who I think really understood Howard; he added a lot to the character.

"Gene was a great help because with him I could get much more subtle, because he's so good at rendering expressions, with humans, with a 'funny animal', anything. Most artists can give you five, six expressions and that's it.

"Actually it got so that the young artists were only good at drawing superheroes but couldn't draw normal people or animals very well.

"Gene was incredible. You should have seen his pencils. Really, there was so much more in his pencils than what the reader could see. Because after inking, and most of all after that shitty printing process they use, what you can see is maybe 20 per cent of what was originally in the pencils. See, they use those plastic plates for printing . . ."



This is STEVE GERBER That is his dog.

Wha-a-t?

"Yes, it's cheaper. Mind you, they even tried *paper* plates! That's the five-and-dime mentality that prevails at Marvel and comic-books in general. Like, before we used to have 20 pages to work with; now it's down to 17, which is absolutely the worst format possible.

"See, that was my main bitch against Marvel, long before that last shoot-out or whatever went down on account of the newspaper strip: It was the 'think-small' mentality. Stan never did anything to get a larger distribution, he never ever promoted *Howard the Duck* when straight papers and 'serious' magazines like the *Village Voice* were running all those stories on the duck, which never happened before for any of the other books. I'm still convinced that had *Howard* been on sale next to *Heavy Metal* or *High Time* the book would have been a smash.

"As it was, the fans had to run to the candy-store to get the book; and people who normally don't read comic books were not exposed to it. You don't get new readers by advertising in the *Marvel's Bullpen* or *Wise Quack*, you know . . . that's why at their most successful Marvel never had a title that sold more than 300,000.

"That's why doing the Kiss comic-book was so important to me. It was not as good as it could have been; there was a lot of time pressure as I had to practically do everything myself — because Marvel were not totally behind it — but it sold very well and showed them that it was possible to get out of that 25-page format with the shitty paper and all.

"What I had in mind next for *Howard* was a $1.50 book with a lot of pages and quality paper. People were ready for it. But obviously you're not going to have this with the X-ray specs ads and the Charles Atlas ads and the stink-bombs ads . . ."

ONE OF THE things that first attracted me to *Howard* was the fact that he hailed from Cleveland (more or less), like almost everything good coming from the States this last couple of years (or so it seems).

The legendary issue No. 1 (legendary because some scumbag dealers highjacked almost the entire run and made it an instant collector's item; within a month it was worth five smackers, and now it's up to 15) showed Howard contemplating suicide in front of the Cuyahoga River, a sewer so foul it is reputedly prone to spontaneous combustion.

"A lot of people gave me a hard time with that — bitching because I was giving their beautiful city a bad name. Shit, I wrote much worse about my home-town Saint-Louis in *Son of Satan*. Originally, we wanted to break from that strange tradition where every comic-book is set in New York. You can DUMP on New York, nobody seems to mind . . ."

Relax, Randy Newman had the same problem with Ohio. And even worse in Baltimore. They really gave him a hard time when he last played there. The city commissioner or some such git climbed onstage and delivered two huge garbage bags full of protest mail against his song "Baltimore".

By the way, in a later issue of *HTD*, there's a drunk singing 'Mary'. He slurs the words and it's more like 'M-u-u-ry." It is Newman's song?

"No, never heard of it."

Same words, too . . .

"Incredible . . ."

Yep. But what about music? What about Kiss? What about his pokes at the likes of Alice Cooper (Eugene "The Star" Spangler in *Man-Thing* No. 16)? Does he like rock at all?

"Oh sure, I like rock, but I was mostly putting down what rock has become — this increasingly slick and sickening sort of muzak, the theatrical props, the big stadiums, the FM tedium. But I like The Beatles, Stones, Dylan, all that period, when rock was a force and was healthy."

In fact he seems to favour the groovy summers of love — Lovin' Spoonful and all that — although his hilarious flash-backs are more slash-backs than anything.

How come he got involved with such noxious bimbos as Kiss?

"Well, *they* approached me. They were Marvel fans to begin with, and they had the kind of management who were willing to play ball. But it was fun, and they were obviously easy to put into a comic-book."

(Ever heard of the Ramones, Gerber? — Ed).

Where does he get all these whacky ideas like Pierre Dentifris, the demented separatist beaver from Quebec? Or the mighty Dr Bong?

"Dr Bong I got from a Kiss fan; he was writing he'd got a good 'bonging' out of the book, or that he'd like to give us a good bonging. I don't know. I have no idea what it means, but it sounded pretty funny, so I used it. But like anything at Marvel, Bong is not what he seems to be. He's in reality this craven, frustrated loser of the lowest order . . ."

You mean, a frustrated *journalist?*

"Right! And he's based on a real journalist too, who attacked me. I made him my next villain, but of course he was more flattered than anything."

Never mind. What about the newspaper strip? How come Gerber isn't writing it anymore?

"That's what triggered the fight between Marvel and me. The syndicate claimed the strip was always late, which it was although it wasn't my fault. Again, it's the wretched working-conditions prevailing in the industry. Val Mayerik was drawing the strip, and I was very pleased with that. But you see, an artist doesn't get paid for a job until at least two months after he's delivered the pencils, so Val had to take on some outside work to survive in the meantime; then it got so hectic he quit, and I had a series of artists working on the strip, never the same, impossible to have any kind of continuity because the artist wasn't under contract.

"I asked Marvel to put one artist under contract for a year — like they would advance him $200 a week for the first two months so the guy could afford to do *only* the strip during that time. But they refused.

"You have to remember the incredible state of servitude artists and writers are subjected to in that industry. There is no contract, no protection; it's all very paternalistic.

"I know one famous editor who refused to hear a famous artist because he'd had the *gall* to bring his lawyer with him to discuss a contract for a book or something. Imagine this in any other industry!

But as for the strip, it was pretty silly on Marvel's part becasue they stood to earn a lot of money. It was just beginning to find its audience . . . And since we had a three-way arrangement (Marvel, the artist and I got a third each) they would have earned money.

"But instead of getting behind me when I threatened to sue the syndicate, they fired me! It all comes down to who owns the Howard character, the creator or the publisher. And it's not as if I was this egomaniac, you know, artist integrity and all that.

"Like, I do think Marvel should get something, a share of what Howard earns, because everytime they put something out they take a risk, and that should be rewarded. But they are completely opposed to even discuss the problem. It would set a precedent, I suppose. So now I'm out, I'm suing them, and the book and the strip goes on but has nothing to do with me . . ."

Actually, the strip has recently been terminated, which is just as well since it had become a pathetic three-panel daily joke with a talking duck instead of Dagwood or something; all the marvellous characterisation was gone. The 35c book is still going, and after a few ghastly issues Gene Colan is back at least, and there is a new writer. He has brought back Dr Bong and hints at a possible reunion for Howard and Bev.

BUT WHAT THEY should do instead is reunite that other odd couple, Steve and Howard, a man and his duck.

But then again, Gerber suggests that he might not want to do that either. He claims that getting the sack was a good thing for him, made him realise how disenchanted he had become, not only with Marvel but with comic-book writing as well, which he now views as being "limited".

Wasn't the duck some sort of catharsis for his own personal problems? So that instead of having an expensive nervous breakdown or an equally expensive couch with a shrink he had Howard to bitch and rant about on love, politics, cults and assorted mindfucks, fast-food poisoning or the sorry state of relations between men and women?

"Something like that, yes. Now I have a different character, whom I named Stewart the Rat, and he's very different from *Howard*. Mainly because I'm a very changed person. Like Howard, I used to beat my head against the walls. Not anymore. I'm less confused; less angry.

"I'm also writing a film script, which is an attempt at breaking into something different. I haven't been contracted to do it — you've got to prove yourself in that trade — but I'm fortunate that my girlfriend is in films and knows all the ropes. I also have various book projects in mind, but I can't talk about them."

He was rumoured to be writing a book on the comics industry, which should be something. He's also been writing copy for Hanna-Barbra funny animals books in Europe.

'I have a lot of fun doing that. See, Howard was anything *but* a funny animal. That's why

This is Stewart The Rat. Say hello, Stewart. OK, now beat it.

when Disney Industries threatened to sue it didn't make any sense; they seemed to think they had a monopoly on ducks dressed in blue.

"Howard is not like the other ducks, Donald or Daffy or any of the flat, one-dimensional funny animals. We've been very careful about this, because in a way it's the whole point. The duck has been thrown into *another dimension* which is not his. The duck has depth, relief, like the humans shown on the page. That's his tragedy, that's what made the book interesting!

"but it was funny, when Disney started sending letters. Everyone at Marvel was shitting his pants. Apparently the Disney lawyers are famous the world over for being merciless and lethal. So they had the duck dressed in red suits instead, or green suits, polka-dots, anything. Anything but blue! But the funny thing is, the Disney people never protested against the book; only when we started the strip. And the strip in black and white . . ."

AS WE WALK back to his place we talk about California and Californians, a mutant race he has so aptly portrayed in his spoof on *Star Wars, 'Star Waaugh';* we find them at a planet-stop called Boorbank, where Korrek has to negotiate with the main honcho there, Big Mack. Gerber also mentions the fact that Stan Lee is about to put out a book on Howard with all the best episodes of the strip; published by Random House. Lee even asked Gerber to write a foreword, but Gerber declined. Still, it's not open war between him and Stan.

"I've always admired Stan for what he did in the past. And I did not immediately drop out of the Marvel pages; there were a few stories they had in reserve, one last *Howard* which ended up completely ruined, and three episodes of *Captain America* in which I'd been asked to tell Steve Rogers' surprising past. I mean they had no idea what I'd come up with. I made him an ex-pacifist; it's only his brother who got killed at Pearl Harbor. I also had Captain America being attacked by the Lincoln statue in Washington, and by a crazed and evil Volkswagen bug; he has to call SHIELD for help!

"But the Marvel people were pleased, they were saying, 'See, Gerber still can tell a good story the Marvel way, he still has it if he only would'. When in effect I was mocking that very style; I followed the Marvel blueprint to a T, you know, the big fight, the hidden identity, etc . . . All the Marvel books read the same these days . . .

Back in his apartment he shows me the preliminary sketches for *Stewart the Rat,* drawn by Will Meugniot, who will do the entire book, and he also lets me read the synopsis for the first episode — weird stuff about DNA and genetic manipulation.

Stewart the Rat is definitely from Surf City: He sports Jim McGuinn shades, Indian shirts and beads, uses a cigarette holder and looks like a cross between Will Coyote and Kim Fowley. The book will hit the stands in March or April and will be independently distributed.

Before leaving, I ask Gerber one more question: What were his colleagues' reactions during the fight between him and the Marvel management?

"Believe it or not, they were shocked; very upset that I could do a thing like that against Stan, against the 'family'. You have to understand we're almost all second-generation Marvelites, all raised on weekly doses of superheroes, and all the artists and writers are fans first and foremost.

"It's not a raise or a little respect they expect or slave for, they're just hoping that one day they'll get a crack at working on *Spider-Man* or *Captain America;* just hope that Big Daddy will let them do that. That's their idea of material retribution . . ."

So Steve Gerber did a Prometheus of sorts, rocked the boat and got the boot from Mt Olympus, condemned to rot in sunny Boorbank. Eat your liver out, smartass. But then Gerber is finding out he'd like to do something else besides writing comic-books. So, like he says in *Star-Waaugh:* "MAY THE FARCE BE WITH YOU".

Moon Martin

"...Songs which deserve friends like 'Moon' gathered around him here, namely a rock-steady rhythm section comprising Phil Seymour on drums and Gary Valentine (formerly of Blondie) on bass. Mr. Seymour was, of course, the Brian Jones lookalike half of the now sadly defunct Dwight Twilley organisation. Present also—albeit briefly—is Willie Alexander, el Loco dropping in to provide some rattling joanna on the author's very zip-some interpretation of 'Cadillac Walk', keyboard duties elsewhere being very capably handled by producer Craig Leon...

...'Bad Case Of Lovin' You' is the track that sold me the record, all yearning passion and that killer middle-eight that took my money away and paid back multifold..." *Sounds Dec. 2*

ON TOUR

TUES FEB 6	SHEFFIELD THE LIMIT CLUB
WED FEB 7	LONDON THE VENUE
FRI FEB 9	LIVERPOOL ERICS
SAT FEB 10	MANCHESTER SALFORD UNIVERSITY
SUN FEB 11	BIRMINGHAM BARBARELLAS

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THRILLS

SHAM 69 RIOT

THERE'S A RIOT goin' on and, yet again, the hapless Sham 69 find themselves in the middle of it all.

Friday's Sham set at Middlesex Polytechnic in Hendon, North London, saw perhaps the worst example to date of the kind of trouble which has already led to calls for the group to be banned from the UK college circuit.

A heavy security presence, consisting of uniformed men with dogs as well as Student Union stewards, was not enough to contain the sporadic outbreaks of violence that were prevalent throughout the evening, chiefly involving confrontations between Sham 69's own entourage and the various boot-boy factions which had descended on the gig in force.

Foremost among the trouble-spots was the stage itself, as successive waves of "exuberant" Sham fans attempted to join the group at the microphones, only to be repelled by the massed ranks of Sham's protectors. Kid gloves were not in evidence.

Midway through only the third number (ironically, "The Cockney Kids Are Innocent") the melee became impossible to contain. A disgusted Jimmy Pursey discovered a broken bottle and the Union's vice-president intervened to halt the gig.

Appeals for calm were made, with Pursey himself taking the most active role in attempts to defuse the situation. An uneasy truce was established, only to erode in the course of the next ten minutes. By the time the eighth song "Hurry Up Harry" had been effectively wrecked, even Pursey had to admit defeat and, in tears and visibly shaken, led his band offstage. (Full 'review' of gig, *On The Town*.)

At this point the police arrived. As it became apparent that the evening was over, the crowds dispersed and there were no arrests.

Pursey was later unavailable for comment though reported, understandably, to be very upset at Friday's events. There are no plans for further London gigs in the near future and, in the light of Pursey's past statements, it will be interesting to see whether Sham 69 can ever consider home-town appearances to be viable again.

For their part, Middlesex Poly stand by the decision to accept the Sham booking in the face of allegations, notably from LSE, that the band's hard-core following is a guarantee of violence and disruption.

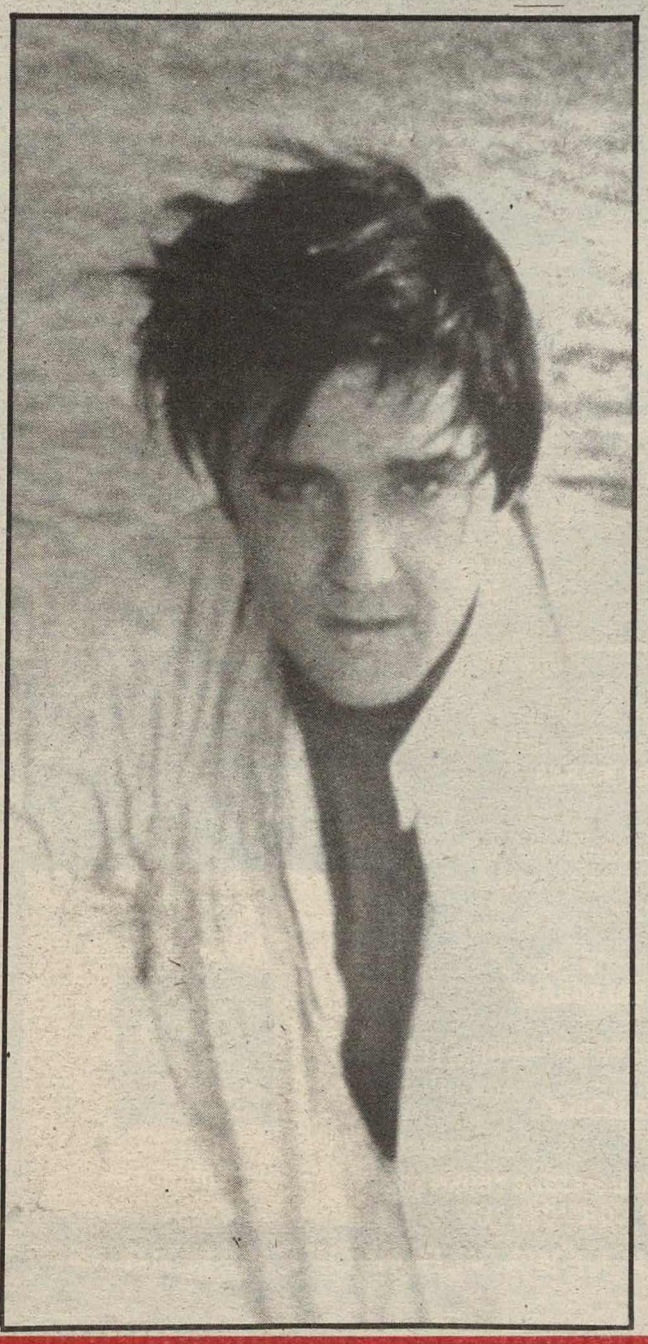
Middlesex report the actual damage as minimal and are satisfied that their security arrangements proved adequate to prevent the trouble getting more seriously out of hand. The general concensus of opinion is that the presence of BBC television cameras, filming for an *Arena* feature around Sham's "That's Life" album, was instrumental in encouraging the exhibitionist excesses so much in evidence.

One might also point — in spite of Pursey's well-known anti-violence and anti-fascist stance — to the pre-set build-up of atmosphere using a loud and ominous "Clockwork Orange" soundtrack and "Land Of Hope & Glory", as if pandering to the aggressively right-wing gangs which have adopted the group for their own.

Be that as it may, the blame cannot be laid at Pursey's door. Sham's last show in Liverpool (never a city noted for the gentility of its children) for example, was a model of the raucous, uncomplicated good-time gig which the band aspire to. Which would seem to reinforce the view that bother of the kind which ruined last Friday's set is *not* an inevitable feature of Sham 69's appeal. Another irony lies in Pursey's defiant declaration to the Poly mob that "I only ever want to play in London!"

Whatever the way ahead, Pursey's progress is beginning to look very difficult indeed.

PAUL DU NOYER



JORDANAIRES OPEN THE ELVIS FILE AGAIN

THE JORDANAIRES, the vocal group who performed on virtually all Elvis Presley's classic recordings, arrived in Britain for the first time just before Christmas — an ambition fulfilled after nearly 20 years.

They'd have liked to have come with Presley, lead singer Gordon Stoker explained, adding that the person to blame for all those Elvis-Says-No-To-Britain stories was not really Elvis himself.

"Elvis was more anxious to come to London than any other place. Every time we mentioned it, he'd say, 'Sure, man, we'll go there in three or four months', and he kept saying that right through the '60s.

"But Colonel Tom Parker (Presley's manager) never did think it was a wise move — partly because of security problems, and partly because he didn't know if there was a suitable venue.

"But the main reason was financial. Colonel Parker would always say, 'We haven't scratched the surface in the United States yet, so why should we go out of the country?'

"If Elvis himself had one reason not to come, it was security. I mean, he had many threats on his life, and he and his staff took them all seriously. He had bars on all the windows at home, even on the second floor, he wore bullet-proof clothes, and he always carried a gun.

"I don't think anyone would have killed him, though I've been present when guys have taken swings at him — you know, some guy would get mad because he'd stolen his girl-friend. There were always so many women — not necessarily young girls, but older women, too — who were wild about him.

"So Elvis was running scared. But if the Colonel had booked him into London then Elvis would have come.

"The Colonel," Stoker mused, "is still the same old Colonel. He maintains a home in Palm Springs, but really he lives at the Hilton Hotel in Las Vegas — he's a very heavy gambler."

It was apparently because of Elvis's — or, rather, Parker's — decision to play extended seasons in Las Vegas that The Jordanaires, along with Presley's drummer D. J. Fontana, and long-serving guitarist Scotty Moore, all deserted him at the beginning of the '70s (and, coincidentally, Presley's wife, Priscilla, walked out at roughly the same time).

"Every time I saw him thereafter," Stoker continued, "I saw a major change in him.

"He wasn't just fat, he was really bloated. He'd even had his face worked on about a year before his death, he was so worried about his appearance. I don't think anyone ever hated the word 'fat' more than Presley.

"But he'd been over-eating for years, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, bacon and banana sandwiches. In the 15 years I was around Elvis I never saw him eat a proper meal.

"He was too cut off from the world. He couldn't go out shopping, he couldn't do anything. He was a victim of demands and circumstances; demands from RCA, demands from Col. Parker, demands from his fan club, demands from the public. Elvis didn't want it to be that way; he just wanted to play his music and have a good time.

"That's when he started taking all these pills. They were all prescribed drugs, but he was taking far too many. And because he never ate any fresh vegetables or decent food they all did far more damage to his body.

"We were all on vacation in Florida at the time of his death. Well, we went back home for the funeral, and just before going, J. J. Fontana rang me and said, 'Gordon, don't come down here — it'll wipe you out. Just remember him the way you last saw him, because it doesn't even look like Elvis in the casket.

"Did you see that picture on the front of the *Nashville Enquirer?* It was syndicated round the world. That was fake — Elvis hadn't looked like that in 20 years. I think that's the cruellest thing that's been done to him, that they superimposed a picture of him in his coffin for the front of the magazine."

The Jordanaires have visited Europe twice, so far. In 1974 they played Paris with Billy Swan and various Nashville musicians at the request of Eddy Mitchell, a likeable if slightly anachronistic French rock'n'roller.

Their latest visit was undertaken at the invitation of Don McLean, who has just recorded what is probably his finest album with them in Nashville, and who asked them to guest on his Boxing Day BBC television special.

Since they have

● *Continues page 17*

BEHIND NME LINES

THIS PLACE looks more like the *Marie Celeste* every sodding day. I'm the only one in the office right now and I don't even *work* here, f'Chrissakes, I just deliver the hate mail. There's not even a lowly *T-Zer* in sight. Supposed to be bleeding journalists and they spend all their time playing footsie with extra curricular activities.

Take that Neil Spencer, for a start. At least when old Nick Logan was Editor he just used to stay locked up in the West Wing all day playing with his paint sprays. But that's not good enough for this Spencer Geezer, oh no! He sits there in his swivel chair like Lord Muck giving interviews to radio people on the state of the rock press. Broadcast this Friday on Capital's Nicky Horne show, it is.

And that nice Mr. Charles Shaar Murray, he's just as bad. I saw him last week being interviewed on BBC's *Nationwide* by Frank Bough with the editor of some new rag called *Superpap*. A right old barney, it was, I can tell you. And Mister Murray has got a single released this week in the guise of Blast Furnace and the Copyright Violations on Nighthawk records called "South Of The River". I don't go in for this 'beat' music much myself, prefer a bit of James Galway's Golden Flute I do, but my grandson tells me it's very good.

Eeee, but they don't half get around, these rock writers! Young Dan'l Baker, he's off in New York at the moment — and before he went he gave an interview to a nice young lady called Val Hennessy of the *Evening News*. And I remember that lad when he was bloody grateful for a receptionist's job! Nice young man, though, he is.

Oooooh, but if there's a pair I *don't* like, God forgive me, it's that Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons. Did you see that thing in *Melody Maker* last week where Pete Townshend of The Who said he'd written a song about them called "Jools And Tone"? Seems he was most upset about what they said about the late Keith Moon in the *Sunday Times* interview they did when their horrible book was coming out. "Gross callousness," Pete called it, "I've written them a nice little song called 'Jools And Tone' that they won't like at all. Though I do sympathise with some of their views." Oh, you're too kind to them, Pete. The little sods have already started writing a song about you and yours called, "Pete And Meher".

And the pair of them are going to be featured in about half-a-dozen episodes of *Nationwide* talking about marriage and related matters starting on February 14. Bloody show-offs. When I was their age I was reviewing The Lurkers on a Sunday morning in Rutland. And you still had enough change out of a penny to buy a Mas serati.

Makes you puke, dunnit?

LUNCHED E. BUNSWORTH

THRILLS

Steve Gibbons is sixteen and would like to write to a girl living in Britain aged between fifteen and seventeen.

Steve's favourite groups are The Stranglers, The Who and Emerson, Lake and Palmer and he is interested in the occult.

Steve Gibbons, 33 Manadon Drive, Crownhill. Plymouth, Devon.

A crazy mixed-up and extremely youthful Steve Gibbons, as seen in 'Blue Jeans' by Sara Moran of Wiltshire. (She was given by her babysitters — honest . . .)

Too much hanging on the telephone, Debbie. Sent by Giblets, all the way from the Natal Mercury.

DANGEROUS VISIONS

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE GREAT BRITISH COMEDY?

IF YOU WATCH the current crop of homegrown comedy shows for too long you can really get quite upset. I know, I did, and I am. You'd think the whole thing was organised by a computer — a big 1984 job in a drab, office green steel case the size of a semi-detached house.

The basic programme of this unpleasant machine is that homosexuals, Irishmen, blacks, Pakistanis, Indians, women, foreigners, breasts, buttocks and inexplicit sex are what the proles find funny.

It plays strictly for a chauvinist/racist guffaw and the sly, smutty snigger

This computer theory is supported by the way formula follows formula in British TV. And we can take the amiable young man syndrone as an example.

Some time — maybe four years ago — somebody had the idea of putting an amiable, presentable young man into some kind of situation where each week he could get into enough mildly amusing 30-minute situations to sustain a 13-week series .

The show (I forget which one it was — it's a genre that tends to blur after a very short time) hit the ratings. Results: straight away the computer pumps out a dozen or more variations on the theme.

Suddenly all over your living room is a whole selection of amiable young men with names like David Roper, Robin Nedwell or Richard O'Sullivan, who wear fab Macca haircuts, Oxford Street leisure wear and have a handy line of chat with the birds.

They tend the sick in *Doctor On The Go*, they play soccer in *Feet First*, they run a chintzy bistro in

BY PUBLIC DEMAND

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SAT. 10th FEB: POOLE ARTS CENTRE
THURS. 15th FEB: OXFORD POLY
FRID. 16th FEB: BRISTOL UNIVERSITY
SAT 17th FEB: COLCHESTER: ESSEX UNIVERSITY
MON. 19th FEB: EXETER UNIVERSITY
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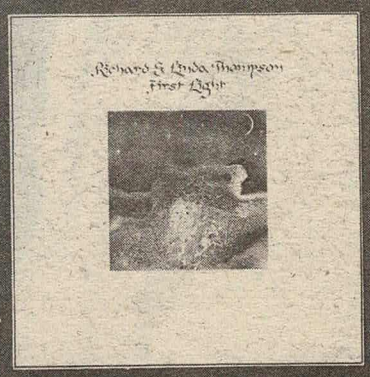

RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON 'FIRST LIGHT' CHR 1177.

FOLK NEWS 'ALBUM OF THE YEAR' 1978

Chrysalis Records & Tapes

Left: the hung-up and strung-out cast of black homosexual neurotics and sex-starved adulterers who send up yer typical comedy fodder in SOAP. Right: Robin Nedwell of The Upchat Connection — an archetypal example of Everything That Is Wrong With Our Telly Today.

Robin's Nest, they sell insurance in *Leave It To Charlie* and they even work as a northern nightclub comic in *Take My Wife.*

It gets to the point where you have to scream 'enough'.

But do they stop? Not a chance.

If too many people yell 'enough' at one particular show the computer goes into Phase Two and sticks in lots of references to wogs, poofs and slap and tickle to keep the turkey on its feet for another series.

That's when it gets really disgusting.

Another example is the Leonard Rossiter syndrome. When Rossiter made the viewing public sit up and pay attention with *The Rise And Fall Of Reginald Perrin,* the computer grabbed him and exposed him on the air with even more intensity than the dread Bruce Forsyth.

Even the remarkably talented Rossiter seems unable to do anything but stand still for it, and doesn't even duck when in *Rising Damp* a black actor (Don Warrington) is placed in the situation to provide space for a lot of tired racist garbage.

Strip away the cheap sex, cheap race and even cheaper formula from the current comedy menu and you don't have very much left — just the exceptions and the Americans.

Discounting the odd, almost apologetic whimsies like *The Good Life* and *Two's Company,* the exceptions stand like shining beacons in a polluted sea. In fact, they stand out so strongly it's almost a redundant exercise to list them.

There's little more that can be said about a classic like *Python.* I've already mentioned *Reginald Perrin. The Muppet Show* is only English by dint of ATV money.

Neither of the Python spin-offs *Rutland Weekend* and *Ripping Yarns,* came up to the standards of their foundling father, but at least the computer had no hand in their creation and they do outshine most of what is being beamed out at the moment.

Fawlty Towers breaks refreshing ground by attacking the current vogue for prejudice-based jokes by always winding up making the monstrous Basil the butt of the joke.

And that brings us to the Americans. There was a time when up-market critics regularly dismissed U.S. comedy shows as the worst things you could see on TV.

They can't do that today.

This isn't the place to analyse the nature of humour, but two important factors must be originality and flair. At the moment the Yanks appear to hold a near monopoly on both.

Even *Happy Days,* now sagging under the load of far too many episodes, manages occasionally to come up with something new and never resorts to the cheap shots of British sitcom.

*M*A*S*H* has gone on a little too long but still has to stay in the money simply for having the balls to run the same war-is-hell joke for years.

Think about it, how many times does a British show even attempt anything like a war-is-hell joke? For that matter, how often does a British comedy show dispense with the safety net of canned laughter?

And then there's *Soap.* Nothing, currently being made in Britain rivals the ludicrous convolutions of *Soap's* two nightmare families wading their way through a welter of murder, passion, insanity, illegitimacy, homosexuality, impotence and racism.

The jokes are never a dirty snigger. The overkill is so complete that all you can do is swing between bemused confusion and hysterical laughter.

It's significant that in a scene where Jody, the Campbell's gay son, breaks up with his football star boyfriend and delivers a lone pre-suicide soliloquy there isn't a single titter from the studio audience. It's only when a deliberate joke about anti-gay bigot Anita Bryant is made at the end that the tension breaks and the audience cracks up.

If you need more proof of the uniqueness of *Soap,* just try to find characters like Bob the dummy and his schizo ventriloquist Chuck in any other show.

It could be that all this praise for American imports isn't totally fair. We don't after all, have to put up with their godawful shows like *The Honeymooners* or *The Jeffersons.* They also have a lot of dues to pay for drek like *Vegas* and *Petrocelli.*

The fact remains, though, that the British programme planners must develop some sense of responsibility and stop simultaneously patronising and playing up to the worst of our collective predjuces. It's either that or our sense of comedy — of which we're already smugly and obnoxiously proud — that is going to give us the reputation of being the real rednecks of the western world.

MICK FARREN

THRILLS

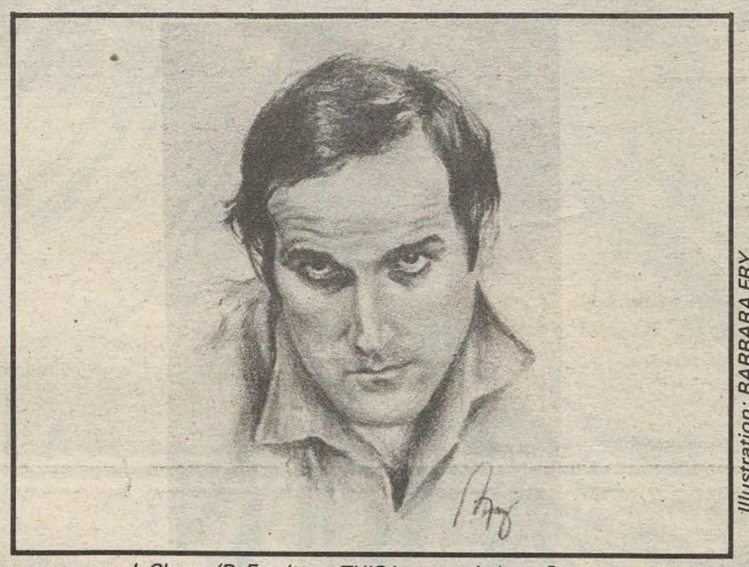

Illustration: BARBARA FRY

J. Cleese/B. Fawlty — THIS is our only hope? . . .

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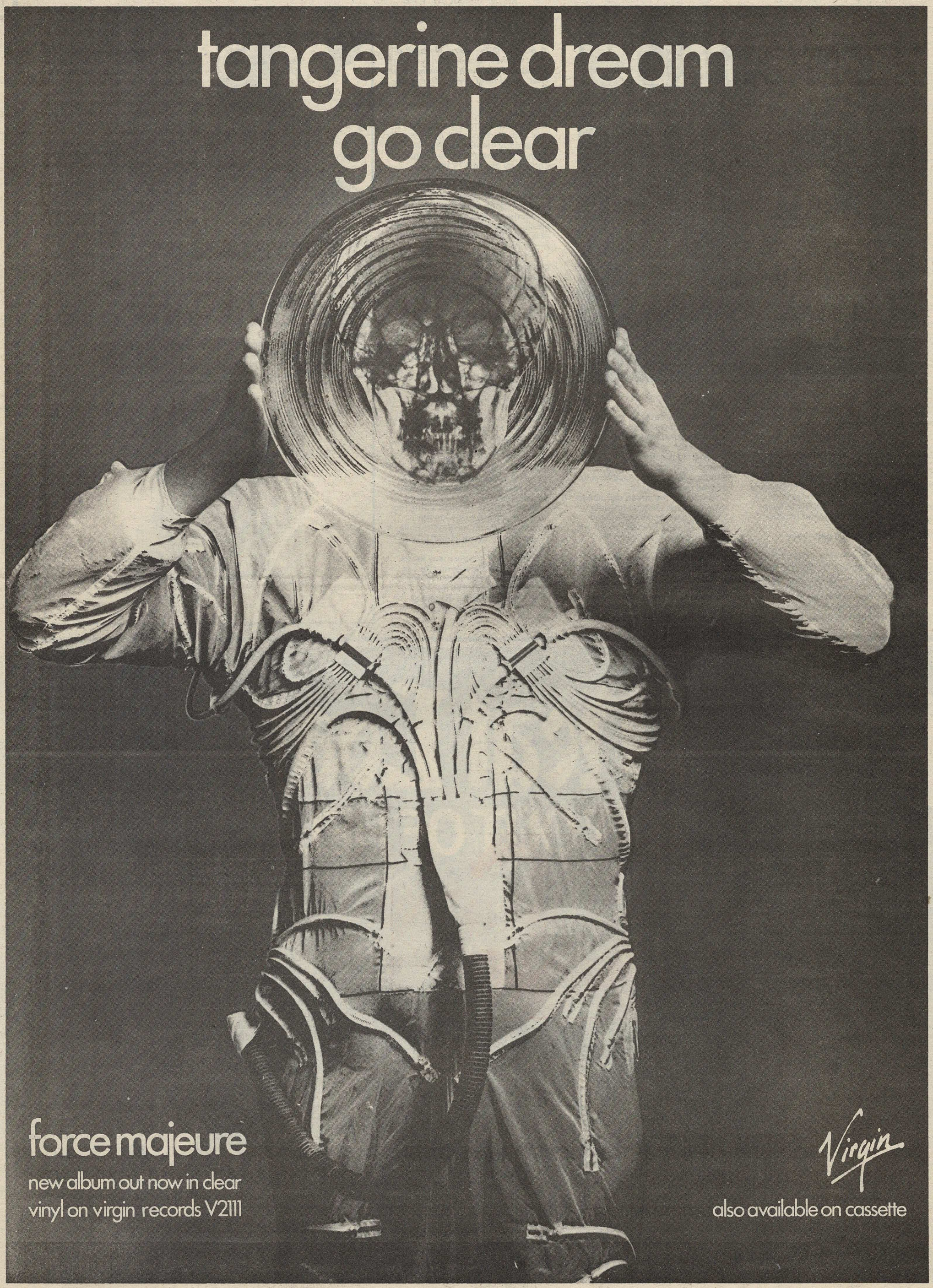

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ROCKY SHARPE REPLAYED

THE REPLAYS

(Wot a cult he turned out to be . . .)

IF YOU CAN'T be a superstar then at least don't sell your ass for a mess of potage. Hang on in there — you may turn out to be a cult.

In the year 2 B.D. (Before Darts) there existed a group called Rocky Sharpe And The Razors. A zappy little combo, all rock 'n' doowop 'n' Grease-A talent, they were packing the joints on the London pub circuit at the same time as the new riders of the *NME* '78 Poll were blitzing the basement clubs.

Only snag: it was a textbook case of galloping chaos. What started out as a semi-pro hobby developed into a logistical headache. Rocky's Razors were offered increasingly frequent and wider spread gigs while some of the members were still in college and others were already loose on the streets, struggling to survive. Half the band were based in Brighton, the rest in London, and no record company could be persuaded to support their proven popularity.

"At that time, record companies weren't interested in a group doing oldies," Rocky explained. "It's changed so much now. We eventually stopped performing with the idea of getting new material together, regrouping when everyone had left college, and trying again."

Rocky and his brother Johnny Stud then set about earning a crust as actor and photographer respectively. "We had this insane desire to eat," quote Johnny. Meanwhile, their old mate and co-founder of The Razors, Mad Den Hegarty, assembled a spin-off group called Darts, who quickly picked up the trail where The Razors had left it. Suddenly the brothers were on the outside looking in at an amazing runaway success story.

"The actual split was amicable," Rocky said, "but after that it got a little bit heavy for awhile. Everything's alright again between us now, though."

With a single in the charts and a comfortable Mayfair PR office in which to meet your Thrillsperson, it's no wonder the revitalized, renamed Replays are full of chuff once more. But it's been a long time between "Rama Lama Ding Dong" (an old Edsels hit, fax freaks) and the posthumous Razors EP that Chiswick issued back in 1976.

"We were both working. I was a rep in Exeter," said Rocky, "and Johnny was getting by as a freelance photographer, and we also did acappella gigs together as The Varooka Brothers. Then we got word that Chiswick was interested in recording a Rocky Sharpe follow-up. So we went along and they let us have an unusual contract, which enabled us to carry on working while we sorted out a record."

Enter one Helen Highwater, who, it would seem, used to be some kind of, ahem, special friend of the original Razors. As she wasn't around to speak up for herself I asked the fellas for the lowdown.

"We knew Helen from a fish and chip shop in Crawley," Johnny supplied, tongue somewhere near his cheek. "How did she come to join the group? Well, she's amazingly good looking and she's got a large chest. Mind you, she's a classically trained singer with an excellent voice."

They recorded "Rama Lama Ding Dong" in April of last year with producer Mike Vernon and a bunch of Mike's mates in on the session. At the time The Replays were bass-less so Pete Wingfield sang bass on the record. But the day after the release of the single in November, by arrangement through a mutual friend, Rocky was visited by a lanky Australian called Dick Hart.

"He only had to open his mouth to say 'Hello' and he was in the group." said Rocky.

As if on cue, at this point in our chat a long, dark shadow fell across the room and a resonant Ozzy voice boomed "Sorry I'm late" from somewhere near the top of the door fame. To cut his entire life down to a sentence: after ten years with assorted groups down under he arrived in Britain in 1975 and now unexpectedly finds himself part of a hit team.

"When I joined the group they said I shouldn't expect anything fantastic. We might work up a cult following and have a lot of laughs but that was about it. Next thing we know, the single's in the charts and we're booked on *Top Of The Pops*. That's some cult following."

So are they now going to go bananas and trek off on a grand round-Britain tour? No, they're not. They're sticking with their day jobs and playing it cool.

"Darts have been knocking themselves out with their touring schedule," said Johnny, "and anyway, we haven't even got a band yet. We're about to record a new single, with Mike Vernon again then we'll probably do an album. By which time we should be in a position to get on stage on our own terms — to do a tour we *enjoy*."

"It's important to stress that we originally started The Razors for the fun of it," Rocky summed up, "and that's the way we want it to be with The Replays. Nothing wrong with being a cult."

CLIFF WHITE

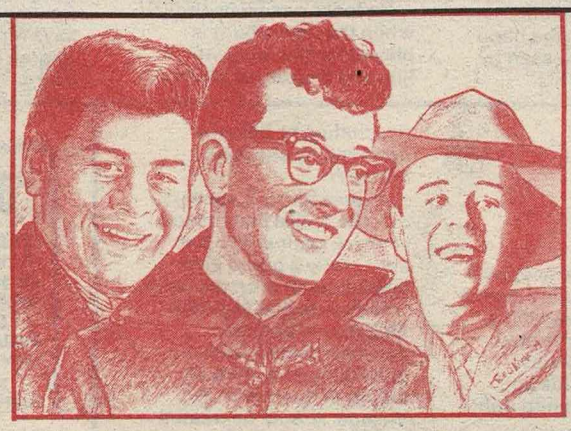
THRILLS

ANNIVERSARY TIME!

THIS COMING weekend, Capitol Radio's "The American Dream" show, hosted by Mike Allen and researched by Jailhouse John Alexander, switches from its 11-to-midnight Saturday slot to the unearthly hour of 1-2am Friday night/Saturday morning. Feb 3 being the 20th anniversary of Buddy Holly's nosedive into immortality, night owls can expect to enjoy a Holly special ("with apologies to Big Bopper and Richie Valens") featuring rare recordings and seldom heard interviews. And love is real, not fade away.

PEGGY SUE (MRS)

THRILLS



VALENS, HOLLY, BOPPER as portrayed by reader JOE O'KANE of Belfast.

FAKING ORGASMS IN THE PRIVACY OF YOUR OWN BEDROOM

A LARGE NUMBER of affluent, mobile American men-about-town are busy turning the bedrooms of their plush duplex apartments and homes into private discos, according to an article in *Billboard* recently.

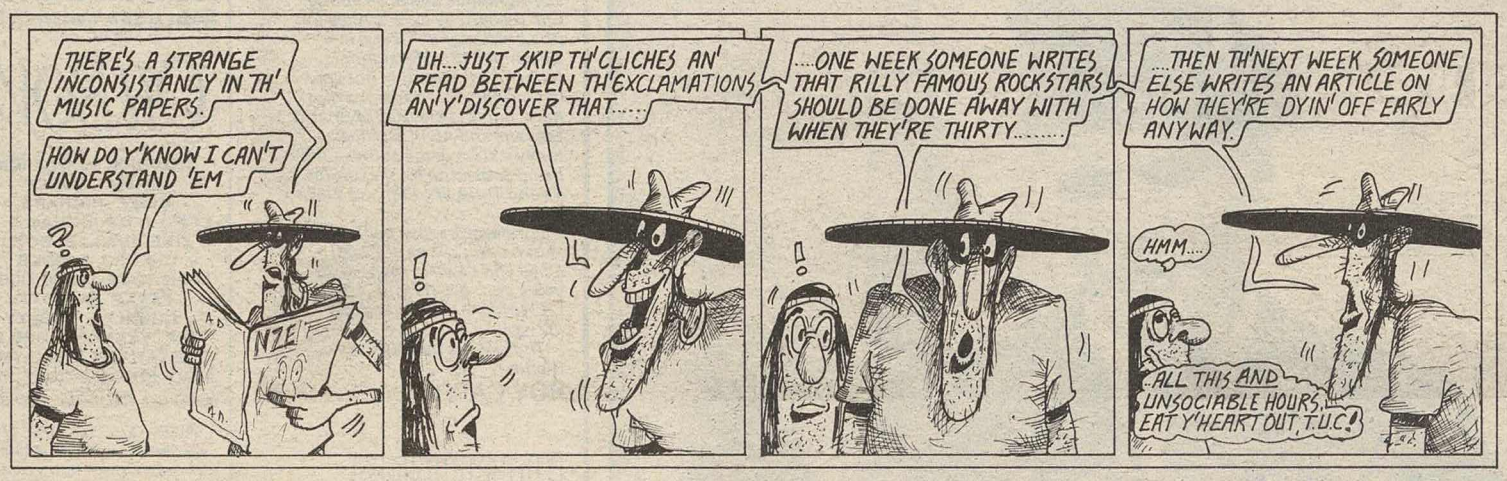
Jack Ransom, head of MGM Stage Equipment, one of the leading U.S. disco lighting equipment suppliers, reckons that these playboy types see the concept of a disco bedroom as an innovative twist to the age-old art of seduction, and "are willing to pay top dollars to indulge their whims."

Punters amongst the nouveau riche are shelling out up to $20,000 for a fancy light show to bolster the activities in their boudoirs. Meanwhile, across the world, oil-rich Arabs are laying out small fortunes — in cash, naturally — to convert sections of their palaces into Western-style disco environs.

BARRY GOBB

THRILLS

The Lone Grover — BENYON


THERE'S A STRANGE INCONSISTANCY IN TH' MUSIC PAPERS.
HOW DO Y'KNOW I CAN'T UNDERSTAND 'EM
NZE
UH... JUST SKIP TH' CLICHES AN' READ BETWEEN TH' EXCLAMATIONS AN' Y' DISCOVER THAT.....
....ONE WEEK SOMEONE WRITES THAT RILLY FAMOUS ROCKSTARS SHOULD BE DONE AWAY WITH WHEN THEY'RE THIRTY.....
....THEN TH' NEXT WEEK SOMEONE ELSE WRITES AN ARTICLE ON HOW THEY'RE DYIN' OFF EARLY ANYWAY.
HMM....
...ALL THIS AND UNSOCIABLE HOURS, EAT Y' HEART OUT, T.U.C.!

HEN FARMER TAXMAN IN CLASH

The Daily Telegraph breaks the news of Paul Simonon's other life, hip credibility for hen farmer taxmen at last! Sent by Louis Davy of York.

RODS Higgs and Douglas — a dynamic double act. Pictures: PENNIE SMITH.

CASTIGATION FROM THE MEDIA MESSIAHS

"WE WERE slagged off by the punks in the same way that the hippies slagged off Scott McKenzie," says Graeme Douglas, principal songwriter with Eddie and the Hot Rods.

"Not that it's a direct comparison," he adds, obviously having little taste himself for the crooning of Mr McKenzie, a one-hit wonder who scored during the flower power era with a song called "San Francisco".

"The thing is that as soon as you get a movement, you get a narrowing of ideas, and people get hard-line ethics.

"You have to think this, you have to wear that, you have to like certain types of things. That's what happened this time."

Douglas is sitting in the rambling Island Records building in West London, and the main aim of the conversation is to find out what's been happening to the Rods since their "Life On The Line" album 18 months ago.

With Graeme is the band's other songwriter, Dave Higgs, who says very little but says it belligerently.

At one point he declaims: "We are never frightened to talk to journalists". But mainly he sits staring, without blinking, through a large, magnifying pair of spectacles.

This gives him the look of a parked Volkswagen with its headlights switched on, but you get used to him after a while.

In contrast Douglas smiles a lot and his face disappears into a series of horizontal lines which match the random assaults on his hair perpetrated by an amateur barber.

Still, at times he seems a bit angry too, and really you can't help but sympathise.

Time was when Eddie and the Hot Rods were the Next Big Thing. In the drab old days before punk rock they were one of the few bands to play good, fast hard rock you could dance to.

Same approach as the punks in fact but earlier, and minus the safety pins and the risque political slogans.

So what happens? Far from gaining respect as musical pioneers they get the cold shoulder for being too soft.

Did Higgs mind all those bands coming along and stealing his act?

"Not really," says he, very morose. "At the time we came out we stole lots of people's acts. According to the press."

Some people won't even accept sympathy when it's offered.

So what have you been doing the past 18 months, Mr Higgs?

"I can't remember".

Heard any good new bands you like?

"I don't go to gigs much. I don't listen to music much either."

So what do you do for musical input?

"I've got five or six albums I've always listened to. Usually I sit and watch TV."

Graeme Douglas is much more voluble, talking readily about the band's new album "Thriller", out in a few weeks time. But then he would be, wouldn't he?

Inevitably, the album will represent not just a comeback attempt but a bid to finally establish the band as an album act.

They came close with "Life On The Line", which contained a number of classy pop songs that Douglas wrote with Ed Hollis, their manager at the time.

One reason the new set has taken so long is that they've split from Hollis.

Sources close to the band say they weren't pleased by what they felt was his growing lack of interest in their activities. For example, it's suggested that he wasn't present at many of the gigs on their debut American tour.

"We sort of lost touch with him in a lot of ways," says Douglas. "After our tours in America and the UK, we hadn't seen him for a while.

"There were lots of unpleasant bits and pieces.

"Anyway, now we've promoted our roadie."

The Rods' new manager is called Meaty because he used to be a butcher. Geddit? To give him his due, he was their tour manager, not their "roadie", and he does seem very enthusiastic.

He looks positively thrilled when the new album is played for our delectation. Sits and shakes his balding head with great gusto.

Gusto is clearly what the Rods will need in great quantities. Unfortunately, Ed Hollis didn't just help to write any old songs. He and Douglas together were responsible for "Do Anything You Wanna Do", the Rods' only number one single. Their finest hour.

The band got a fearsome bashing from our own Tony Parsons over Hollis's involvement.

Douglas can virtually quote the original text from memory though it was more than a year ago.

"He called us 'Conservative, fascist puppets of a megalomaniac Canvey Island Kim Fowley'," says Mr Douglas with some degree of shock-horror in his voice.

"But Ed never manipulated us at all. It's unfair to say that. A superficial insight."

Wasn't the suggestion, though, that your songs reflected the views of an older manager figure rather than of young musicians?

At this both Douglas and Higgs laugh uproariously.

"Ed would love you to say that," says Douglas. "In fact, he's a couple of years younger than either of us."

So much for that idea . . .

Meanwhile, in the absence of Hollis, Douglas has been busy finding lyrics to go with his tunes.

"The trouble is I tend to find too many words and they're too long. I had to get my razor out and cut them down a bit."

The first evidence of his work as a solo writer with the Rods is their new single "Media Messiahs", which sounds broadly similar to the stuff he wrote with Hollis.

According to Douglas: "The song's about warthogs who talk their way onto the front pages of the music papers. One week they're on one cover, the next week on another."

Do you find that so distasteful?

"Well, there's a lot of manipulation going on. When I was a kid, I used to believe what I read in the music papers. I've taken a three-year course in cynicism since then."

The Rods go back on the road in Britain next month to help promote the new album, and it's always possible the three-year course in cynicism may turn into a four-year course.

The band have clearly lost some ground, as Dave Higgs admits.

"Okay, so maybe we have lost a *bit* of ground, but that gives us an incentive to work a bit harder."

One thing, though: at least Island have allowed the band to take their time over this crucial new album.

"They didn't just allow us to take our time," says Graeme Douglas. "They insisted on it."

You mean they didn't like what you offered them at first?

"You could say that," says Douglas, a bit ruefully.

Ah well, good luck lads. You may need it.

BOB EDMANDS

THRILLS

ONE HIT WONDER CLAIMS SECOND HIT

SEEMS THE Green Beret combat training of Viet Nam veteran Staff Sgt. Barry Sadler has come in handy — yet again. Sadler, you may recall, was the somebody's-gotta-do-the-job recorder of the ultra-patriotic "Ballad Of The Green Berets", a chart-topping single that not only became America's biggest seller of 1966, but also inspired true-gritter John Wayne to star in a movie of the same title.

As with most one-hit wonders, little has been heard of Sadler since. That was until December 1, when the ex-Marine stopped 51-year-old Nashville songwriter Lee Emerson Bellamy dead in his tracks with a bullet between the eyes.

The B-movie scenario goes something like this.

Sadler was in the apartment of Darlene Sharpe (a mutual acquaintance of both men) when Bellamy — who, according to Sadler's statement had been harassing and threatening Sharpe throughout the year — knocked on the door of the lady's apartment.

Sadler made a quick exit through a side door, went around to the front of the building and discovered Bellamy climbing into a van.

Sadler alleges he shouted out for Bellamy to stop, at which point Bellamy drew a gun. Sadler promptly drew a revolver and repeated his order for Bellamy to stop. When his request was ignored, he fired his gun.

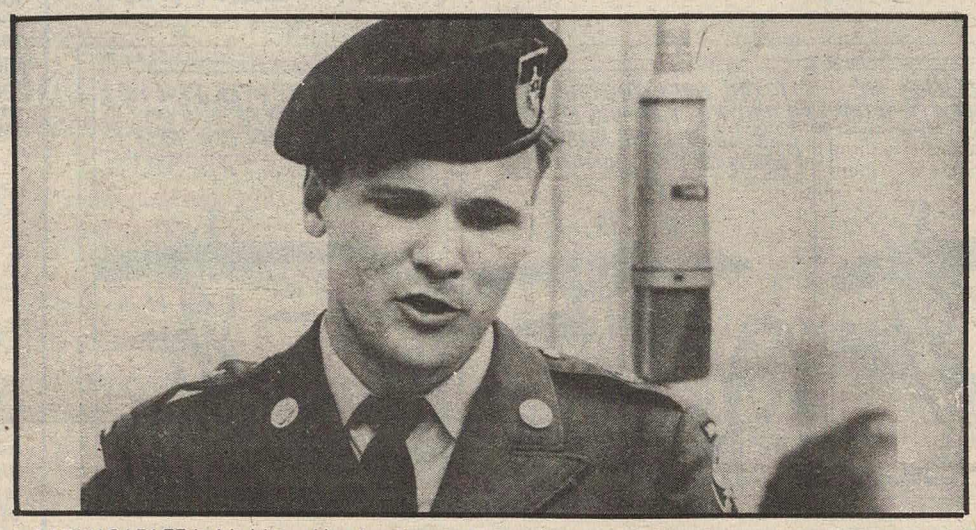
Although he hit him right between the eyes, it's between the eyes,, it's Sadler's defence that he aimed to miss, insisting that Bellamy's death was as a result of his bullet either ricocheting or Bellamy accidentally shooting *himself!*

At presstime, it appears that the police hadn't filed charges against him but apparently a grand jury investigation is on the cards.

Rumours that Malcolm McLaren intends to approach Sadler with a possibility of cutting an album of duets with Sid Vicious, should be treated lightly.

ROY CARR

THRILLS



BARRY SADLER in his hit-making heyday.

"Oh Boy!" attacked by The Alley Cat

THIS columnist has always high praise for the "Oh Boy!" TV series. But producer Jack Good must be held responsible for permitting the most crude exhibitionism ever seen on British TV—by Cliff Richard last Saturday.

His violent hip-swinging during an obvious attempt to copy Elvis Presley was revolting—hardly the kind of performance any parent could wish their children to witness.

Remember, Tommy Steele became Britain's teenage idol without resorting to this form of indecency.

ALMOST 20 years on to the day, Jack Good's innovative television rock extravaganza is once again being presented "live" on a London stage.

One only has to read the self-righteous attack on young Cliff Richard by NME's Alley Cat (the precursor of T-Zers) in December 12, 1958 edition (above) to realise that not only did old showbiz traditions die hard, but that the likes of Shakin' Stevens and Alvin Stardust — today's stars of the show — may be no substitute for the original Young Turks like Cliff and Vince Taylor.

Furthermore, just compare the re-run ticket prices of £2.50; £3.50 and £4.00 to those of 20 years ago: 3/6 (17½p); 4/6 (22½p); 5/6 (27½p) and 6/6 (32½p).

Those were the days, my friends!

ROY CARR

THRILLS

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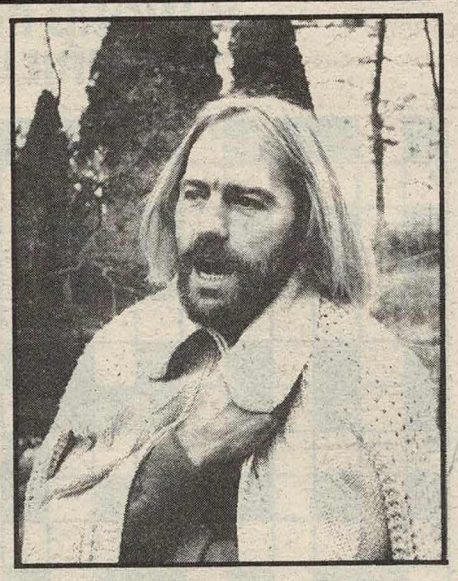
Roy Harper stands up for musicians' stomachs — EMI picks up the tab



EMI RECORDS were last week ordered by a judge to withdraw Roy Harper's two-year-old album "Bullinamingvase" from the shops. They also had to make a contribution to charity and pay court costs after it was decided that the lyrics of a song called "Watford Gap" slandered the Blue Boar motorway eaterie — a place known intimately to the intestines of many a struggling rock artist.

The judge stated that the well-known sheep farmer and former folkie implied in his song that the Blue Boar "provided grease and excrement for food, was a danger to public health, and was a habitual resort for football hooligans."

"Watford Gap" goes on to refer to the countryside surrounding the Blue Boar in convoluted metaphoric terms: "ravished like a syphilitic whore."

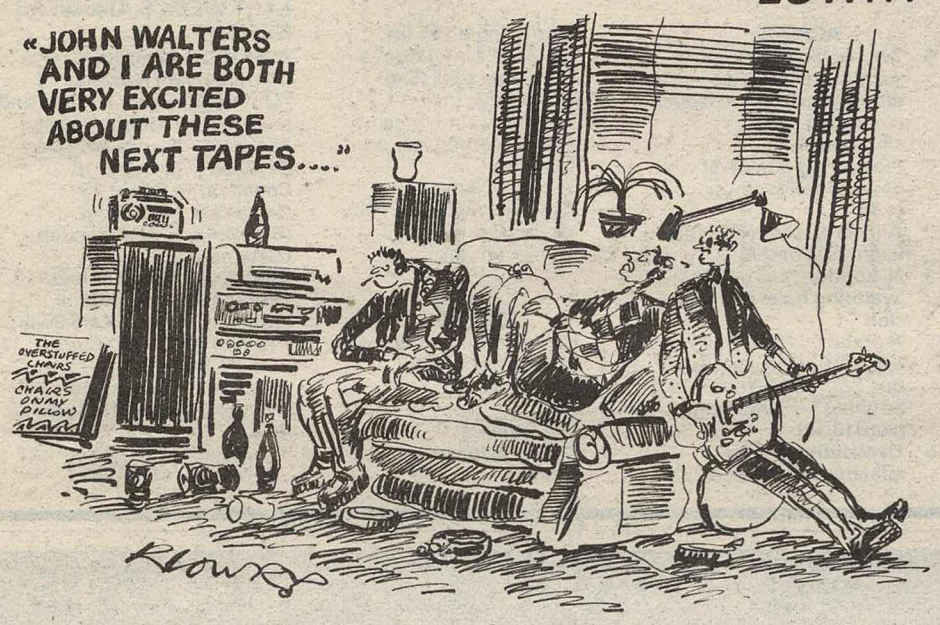
The song was described by counsel for Blue Boar Motorways Ltd as a "totally unjustified attack in the most offensive of terms". EMI offered no defence to the charges.

Harper himself remained unmoved by the episode.

PAUL RAMBALI

THRILLS

LOWRY



"It's pathetic really. I sent him a recording of my grandmother's funeral."

PARDON THIS interruption into what looks like a very nice, intelligent and generally sensible *Thrills* page, but I've just developed this theory (it came to me in a flaming pie, if you must know — ask John Lennon) about why rock stars go all mushy and horrible after a certain amount of time in the public eye, whereas bluesmen, jazzers (except for the fusion funsters) and magnificent Rugged Individualists of the Coyne/Morrison/Beefheart varieties keep their ethics, capabilites and perceptions intact for far longer periods.

Way it works: all yer Dylans, Jaggers and so forths have had their souls stolen by being photographed too many times (Bob's worried about this and tries to get photographed as little as possible, whereas Jagger has been committing spiritual suicide-by-shutter for — ohhhh — *ages* now). This is a problem which doesn't really affect the likes of Albert King or Lester Bowie, since no-one's exactly killing themselves to immortalise these gents on film.

Incidentally, this only applies to still photographs. Movie stars have other problems, which'll haveta wait until my next theory to explain fully. In the meantime, I hope this answers all your questions and now back to our advertised *Thrills* page . . .

CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY

JORDANAIRES (SLIGHT RETURN)

● *From page 11*

maintained the same line-up of Stoker, Neal Matthews, Hoyt Hawkins and Ray Walker since 1958, they have acquired a professional reputation second to none, and have never needed to cash in on the Presley connection.

Ordinarily, they are kept busy with regular studio work in Nashville.

However, despite their own vocal expertise they modestly accept that whatever kudos they possess is largely the legacy of their work with Presley, and almost sub-consciously seem to direct the conversation towards him rather than themselves.

For example, Gordon Stoker disclosed that the posthumous boom in Presley recordings had not benefitted the Presley estate at all.

"In 1975 Elvis and the Colonel made a deal with RCA and sold the rights to all his recordings prior to 1973 for a lump sum — that doesn't include the publishing rights, but it does include all the royalties. So since the greater amount of the sales is stuff that he recorded early on, the estate is not getting anything.

"Now the fact is that we didn't really make that much out of working with him — no-one did. And although it's shocking, he didn't make what he should have either. Someone asked me recently if Presley had died broke, and I can only say that in terms of ready cash, he probably did.

"He actually borrowed about $1,400,000 from a bank in Memphis about three months before he died, and at his death he still owed $1,100,000. And this is absolutely unbelievable when you consider the kind of money this guy made.

"You see, he actually gave away, and got rid of, more than he had coming in. He was trying to keep three homes, he had a lot of leeches round him, a lot of people making money off him, and he had no tax deductions at all. He once told us that he wanted the government to come in and take every dime that was coming to them."

But, now, of course, Presley's recordings are selling in profusion once again. Stoker shook his head, and remarked on the sad, perennial truth that nothing boosts an artist's career as much as the ending of it.

BOB WOFFINDEN

THRILLS

STEVE HILLAGE ON TOUR

FEBRUARY
21 EDINBURGH ODEON
22 NEWCASTLE CITY HALL
23 MANCHESTER FREE TRADE HALL
24 SHEFFIELD CITY HALL
25 BIRMINGHAM ODEON
26 LIVERPOOL MOUNTFORD HALL
27 LEICESTER DE MONTFORT HALL
28 OXFORD NEW THEATRE
MARCH
1 EXETER UNIVERSITY
2 LONDON RAINBOW
4 BRISTOL COLSTON HALL

TICKETS: £1.80 £2.40 £2.80 EXCEPT THE RAINBOW
FOR WHICH TICKETS ARE: £2.00 £2.50 £3.00
POSTAL APPLICATIONS FOR TICKETS TO BOX OFFICES.
PERSONAL APPLICATIONS TO EDINBURGH, BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER AND RAINBOW ON JANUARY 19.
SHEFFIELD AND NEWCASTLE ON JANUARY 26.
BRISTOL ON FEBRUARY 2.

MAYIBUYE — all 53 of 'em . . .

ROCK AGAINST APARTHEID

FEBRUARY 10 is the date of the most unusual concert so far this year. It's the first major benefit gig organised by the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and it features three Southern African bands now living in exile in London: Jabula, Immigrant and Mayibuye.

Jabula are the best known of the three; their free-flowing Afro-jazz is available on a number of albums on their own Jabula label, the latest of which "Jabula In Amsterdam" has been banned in South Africa.

Immigrant comprise four white Zimbabweans and three West Indians. Their first single, "One World", on Different Records, is gentle, melodic reggae, while the flipside includes a vocal track "Sasukae Zimbabwe" with the ZAPU Choir.

Mayibuye are a ten-piece vocal group, who use traditional Zulu, Sotha and Xhosa tunes for their explicitly political (some might say Stalinist) lyrics. They also recite poems, and feature songs by Vuyusile Mini, a trade unionist hanged by the South African government in 1964.

In exile, the bands remain politically active. Immigrant work with the ZAPU section of the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front; Mayibuye are the cultural unit of the African National Congress. Many of these musicians were jailed in their home countries for various political activities (which sometimes meant no more than playing the wrong type of music); none can return without the fear of near-certain arrest and torture.

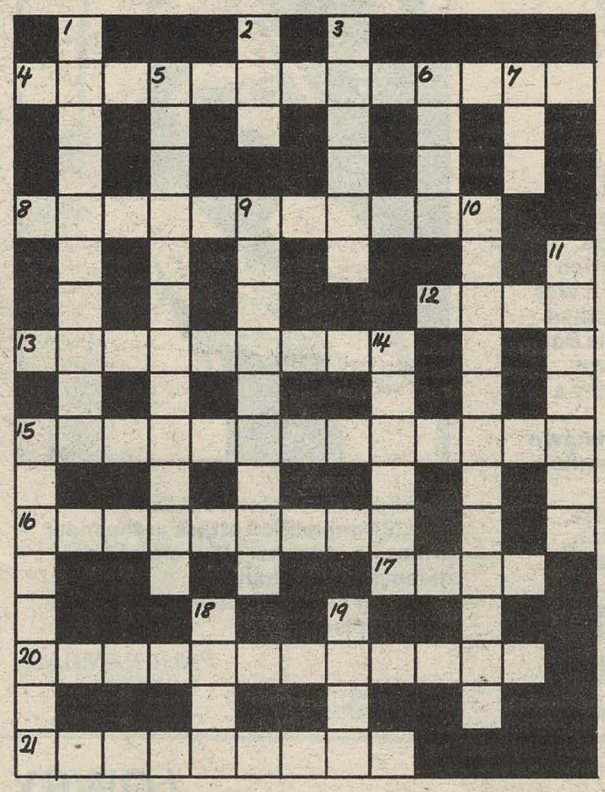
A fourth exiled group, Red Rinse, had to withdraw from the bill and have been replaced by English group The Reelists.

Paul Brickhill of AAM says the concert at Camden Town Hall is 'a dry run'; if it proves successful, AAM plan a series of benefit gigs and have promises of support from several as-yet-unnamed but 'well-known' English rock bands. The Anti-Apartheid Movement, incidentally, is not affiliated to any political party and draws its membership from all shades of the political spectrum, including the Tories. I wonder what the *Daily Express* will make of that.

(Tickets for the Feb. 10 concert are available from AAM, 89 Charlotte St., London W1. Price £1 plus S.A.E.)

GRAHAM LOCK

X-WORD PROMOTED TO THRILLS SHOCK



ACROSS

4 Jazz keyboardsman currently exploiting disco/pop/funk crossover marketing strategy situation (6,7)
8 Pioneering punk brat who gave up sex for money! (4,7)
12 Ain't she sexy! (This Clue Exploits Women)
13 N. London rock bizness 'watering hole' and rock club
15 Fronted by *NME*'s ex very own Chrissie Hynd (Buy Buy Buy "Stop Your Sobbing" — gratuitous plug) (3,10)
16 Descriptive of EC's affection for his label? Or a grinding hit 45 for Golden Earring from a few years back (5,4)
17 Somehow, in an alternative universe, Cooder turned into an Irishman!
20 A coupla famous Socialists with surf city connections! (6,6)
21 Nah, February!

DOWN

1 Stiff recording artiste with Eastern-sounding monicker (4,6)
2 What you'd pay to book The Tubes?!
3 Roger Chapman's old band
5 Aka Winston Rodney, the Man In The Hills (7,5)
6 Gulp! Chi Coltrane appears to have swallowed a disco band whole!
7 Euro-rockers capable of absolutely anything!?
9 Unaccompanied singing, such as practised by R Sharpe and Co.
10 Sheer mink toe (anag. two words)
11 & 19 As they were before Big Daddy Berry Gordy took their number away
14 These days applied to anyone who mimes convincingly on Top Of The Pops — This has been a cynical clue
15 Early '60s UK instrumental combo who struck lucky with "Telstar" one-off
18 Find the word which can be paired with the following: BARBED, LIVE, FUSE. You have 30 seconds. If you cannot answer, please move on to the next question.
19 See 11 Down

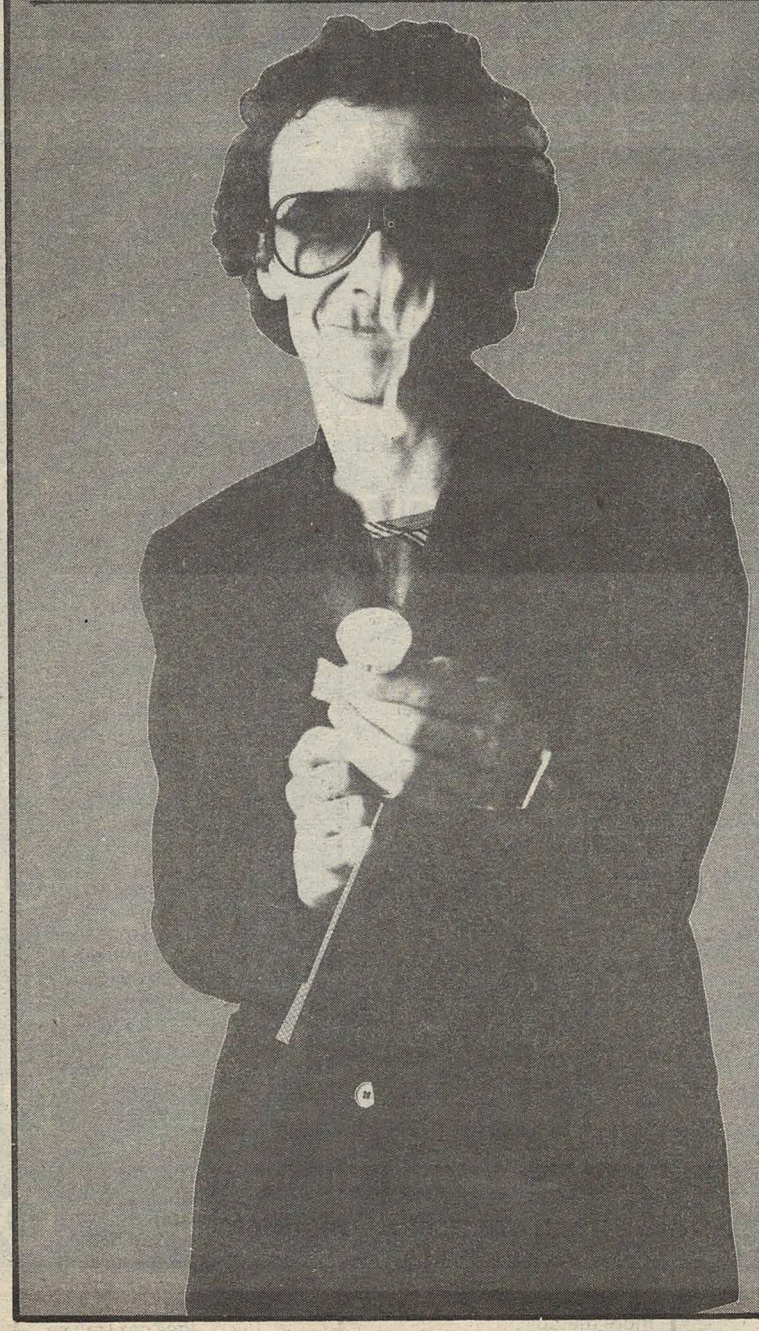
ANSWERS NEXT WEEK. LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS BELOW.

ACROSS: 1 "Backless"; 5 (Thunderclap) Newman; 6 "Ummagumma"; 8 Adam and the Ants; 11 (George) Melly; 13 (Lee) Brilleaux; 14 "Heart Of Glass"; 17 Hype; 18 Coasters; 22 Devo; 23 Santa-N.A.: 24 Aretha (Franklin); 26 Thunderclap (Newman).

DOWN: 2 "Armed Forces"; 3 "Equinoxe"; 4 Capitol; 5 (Graham) Nash; 7 Kate Bush; 9 (Bette) Midler; 10 Budgie; 12 "You're So Vain"; 15 Olsson; 16 Syreeta (Wright); 19 OGWT: 20 Raga; 21 Clash; 25 RCA.

THE END

GRAHAM PARKER & THE RUMOUR U.K. TOUR



HARVEY GOLDSMITHS ENTERTAINMENTS PRESENTS

SUN	25 FEB	BELFAST	WITLOW HALL
MON	26 FEB	DUBLIN	OLYMPIA BALLROOM
WED	28 FEB	CARDIFF	UNI
FRI	2 MAR	SHEFFIELD	CITY HALL
SAT	3 MAR	LIVERPOOL	EMPIRE
MON	5 MAR	NEWCASTLE	CITY HALL
TUES	6 MAR	EBINBURGH	ODEON
WED	7 MAR	ABERDEEN	CAPITOL
THUR	8 MAR	GLASGOW	APOLLO
SAT	10 MAR	LANCASTER	UNI
SUN	11 MAR	LEEDS	UNI
MON	12 MAR	BRISTOL	COLSTON HALL
TUES	13 MAR	EXETER	UNI
THUR	15 MAR	BRADFORD	ST. GEORGES HALL
FRI	16 MAR	MANCHESTER	APOLLO
SAT	17 MAR	MANCHESTER	APOLLO
MON	19 MAR	BIRMINGHAM	ODEON
TUES	20 MAR	BIRMINGHAM	ODEON
WED	21 MAR	IPSWICH	GAUMONT
THUR	22 MAR	PORTSMOUTH	GUILDHALL
SAT	24 MAR	BRIGHTON	CENTRE
SUN	25 MAR	READING	HEXAGON HALL
MON	26 MAR	LEICESTER	DE MONTFORD HALL
WED	28 MAR	DERBY	ASSEMBLY ROOM
THUR	29 MAR	ILFORD	ODEON
SUN	1 APRIL	OXFORD	NEW THEATRE
MON	2 APRIL	LONDON	HAMMERSMITH ODEON
TUES	3 APRIL	LONDON	HAMMERSMITH ODEON

SINGLES

GRUPPO SPORTIVO. Pic: TOM SHEEHAN

Music To Read The Papers By

BLAST FURNACE AND THE COPYRIGHT VIOLATIONS: South Of The River (Nighthawk)
Nobody calls their cat Dee Dee Ramone on this record. Famous friends do not sing backing vocals on this record. It is *not* a cuddly good-old-Charlie - he's-got-a-record-out record. It is the best single released out of the 100 plus releases this week and no doubt you'll read otherwise elsewhere but then petty jealousy has always been as rampant in the music business as hyperbole and money.

Pick a river, any river. . . the Thames or the Hudson. . . from amphetamine psychosis in IPC tower-block cub reporters to punk icon mouthings about heading straight to Harlem "and-the-blacks - better-appreciate-me" as soon as the punk icon hits New York City (and ending up posing down CBGB's, silly boy). . . all these things went into this record.

It wags a finger, this record, but then our music has always been about sex and drugs and wagging fingers. . . and it is certainly more relevant to what's been happening these past couple of years than, say, "White Riot", "Ulster Boy" or "Theme". As a rule, journalists-turned-musicians achieve asshole status almost on a par with musicians-turned-sage, and apart from Murray and Chrissie Hynd, I can't think of one exception to this rule.

I don't know if you saw that play on television, *Waterloo Sunset,* but this would have been perfect for the soundtrack. I suppose it's derived from R&B I wouldn't know about that, but it does sound more like Creedence Clearwater Revival than Doctor Feelgood or The Pirates and that can't be bad. He could even end up on *Top Of The Pops.*

QUEEN: Don't Stop Me Now (EMI)
Same as usual.

ROY HILL: I Like I Like I Like (Arista)
Re-released after three months and even after so desperate a move doesn't seem pathetic — just seems just. The Trojan Horse of Orthodox Rock toys with fashionable sex and sexy fashions and finds them funny; wanting for nothing, happy to be an island. Could Fran Lebowitz be this good if she resisted the compulsion to drag out the killer phrase into the three-page thesis? Maybe, if she was English and had Bimbo Acock helping her.

EVELYN "CHAMPAGNE" KING: I Don't Know If It's Right (RCA)
I didn't really expect "Shame" to be followed up except by a car crash or a plane accident and then a legendary niche forever, but of course Evelyn has gone the way of all flesh and wasted her talent on some scuzzy follow-up. From the all-time paragraph-paralyzing, critique-killing, heart-hurting, brain drained in favour of the feet feelings of "Shame" (always my favourite single, a difficult thing to swear to for anyone) to the cool-nightclub creeper-blackface of this smooch mush; all about the usual thing of not wanting to sleep with some boy if he's only using you. Evelyn, I thought that was the thing that "Shame" celebrated so innocently and irretrievably! It slinks a little like "Golden Years", if you look for its virtues; otherwise it's a wound, a waste. From nothing to nowhere in one miraculous single. Congrats, Evelyn.

ABBA: Chiquitita (Epic)
The wheels are really rolling out from under the Abba wagon, what with "Summer Night City" ditching that distinctive frozen - opera - fairground sound and pinning its hopes on disco, getting the lowest chart place in ages; now old Ugly Wugly and The Ass That Ate Stockholm getting their undeath-us-do-part license, and even worse this bit of bla-la. It really is a rubbish song; Abba sang it on the UNICEF show. WHY? There are several questions one could ask about this. So that when we heard it we would associate it with the old Abba (clean and nice to orphans) rather than the new bombshell (rude divorces)? So that we would all rush out and buy it, thinking our royalties would end up in some starving mite's tummy? Did they time the divorcal announcement to come closely on the heels of the UNICEF show, to prove that they aren't *all* physical, that they have a spiritual side too?

It don't matter. This will be a hit but not massive. It lurches into insubstantial singalong chorus-thingy much too soon. "Chippolata" is not a name that rolls lightly off the consumer's tongue. The Abba men start to seem less and less like crafty tunesmiths every time that "Chihuaha" plays.

GRUPPO SPORTIVO: P.S. 78/Blah Blah Magazines (Epic)
Who Phil liked, you may remember, because he read something nasty and ambiguous into their lyrics, and for whom Paul Morley started the backlash because they weren't brown-haired and boring enough and because there was something as frivolous as GIRLS in the band. Valid stuff, this — I'm not just trying to cover some paper — because Gruppo Sportivo have written a great song about *NME* called "Blah Blah Magazine". Personally, I can't think of anything more fitting for a pop singer to sing about than the pop press; we're so important, they're obsessed with us.

Annoyed or amused by Paul Moany saying they were a missing link to or from Abba or something, Gruppo have made Art our of their resentment instead of sitting around stroking it like most of these morons do. They kick around like carthorses and win: *"This week your NME tells you we're like Blondie/Next week I'm like Dury/Let's go 'Hee hee hee hee'."* The way those girls keep saying "Abba" is a revelation; why all the fuss about French and German girl-voices? Dutch girls are IT.

A-side is a frivolous, semi-French gemette, key

clues in English — one long same riff all the way through like that chorus you meet once in a while. "The Modern Dance" is a good one for it and I just wish there was a record of it going on forever to act as perfect, unfindable background music. Josie and Thingy — the Grupettes — are spine-curdling with their spoilt-brat pout-enunciation: *"We were teenagers then/And now I see you again; You'd better watch out, watch out for me!/I've grown up, you will see!"* I suppose that Gruppo Sportivo *are* just one big in-joke (I don't know why they even bother with an audience) but I think only a really studious person could distrust them. Stupidity and all its attendant charms run rife throughout their music. Their accents are so sweet, and their attempts at being snide are even sweeter.

Not a hit but definitely the linking miss between Eddie Cochrane and the Von Trapp family.

Reviewed this week by JULIE BURCHILL

ELVIS COSTELLO: Oliver's Army (Radar).
Cringeing under accusations of being samey, El One-Note has stopped pulling model girls' hair and turned his Napoleonic complex on politicians — in this obvious slice of "Armed Forces", saying boo to Churchill's corpse and expecting it to turn over and sob face down into it's pillow.

This is Costello's "Winter of '79" or "English Civil War", with the scare-mongering for pleasure and profit usually found in those pop singers suffering from meglomania and paranoia — much more tuneful and enigmatic here but no less disposable. The unison of acoustic and electric brings to mind mid-period Dylan songs called stuff like "Queen Achilles Revisited" and the voice sounds more like Manfred Man than ever. The lyrics read like a *Holiday 79* brochure, as glib as that free colour pull-out with "Give 'Em Enough Rope" but a little more melodic.

The reference to a "white nigger" is Elvis being typically sensitive and original and will no doubt result in mucho controversial mileage as radio programmers break out in a hot flush — but will, of course, get it a rave review in the ("Ain't nothing but a") Socialist Worker's Party rag.

Boring in a small way.

EQUALS: Baby Come Back (Lightning Old Gold)
DARTS: Get It (Magnet)
GREG KIHN BAND: Remember (Beserkley)
RADIO STARS: The Real Me (Chiswick)
BETTE BRIGHT AND THE ILLUMINATIONS: The Captain Of Your Ship (Radar)
The ghosts of pop past and president vie for the attentions of the wireless playlists. No contest, of course . . .

Darts strive for the cubicle creativity sound of the Brill Building circa nearly 20 years ago (before my time I'm afraid, Horatio, though I'm sure it couldn't have been *this* vapid). I guess it will make the charts if their lead girl singer loses a few pounds before sporting those nostalgic hot-pants of hers on *Top Of Etcetera,* but I've recently witnessed them on *Saturday Banana* and must predict, as much as it grieves me to do so, a swift return to obscurity for last year's Rocky Sharpe and The Razorblades without their ex-asset Mad Den (retired) out front scaring the little children.

From the quasi - Robert - Powell - as - Jesus - even - though - I'm - married - to - an - ex-member - of - Pan's - People - publicity - pictures and the evidence of his torpid sub-John Denver acoustic wimpy whimsey product, the Greg Cloying Band all see themselves as The Most Sensitive Man Alive. Honestly, boys, you make Labi Siffre look like Tim Buckley, you really do.

Radio Stars' problem is that their *raison d'etre* is being whacky and nobody gets the joke because there isn't one. I understand that their lead singer makes a habit of breaking his spine when the band perform live, which I suppose must be quite interesting for those of you with a ghoulish streak, but this disc of their brings to mind nothing so much as the worst moments of the Arrows. Don't tell me you don't remember Arrows.

I feel sorry for Bette Bright — she sings good old songs very badly and she wants to be a sex symbol. She also used to be in Deaf School, but let's not rub salt into her gaping wounds. Like her soulmate Little Nell, Bette tries to be kitsch but unfortunately does not appear to know the difference between camp and corn.

Berserkley, Chiswick and Radar . . . talk about labels who believe in digging holes just to fill them in again (why, oh why, did you do it, you little Mekons?).

Lots of black records these days (I'm talking about skin pigmentation, not the vinyl, moron) have a plethora of funky - funky - get - down - party - party - awright - background noises that sound as contrived as all hell, but I reckon The Equals were the first ones to do it, don't you? They sound so casual about it, real joyous simpletons, spreading happiness wherever they may go and let's hope that it gets into the charts and David Johansen covers it for his second album.

THE KINKS: Superman(Arista)
Sorry, Raymond, but one good line does not a hit single make *("I looked in the mirror at my pigeon chest, / I had to put on my clothes coz I felt so depressed.")* Apart from that

■ *Continues over*

SINGLES CONT.

■ *From page 19*

we just get Ray trying to play Wilhelm Reich and unravel the repression motivation factors behind right-wing ideology. I think the way you've "borrowed" the riff to "2-4-6-8 Motorway" is quite cute, Ray, but you've really bitten off far more than you can chew with this subject matter. You'd have thought that 1976 and all that would have gotten rid of Ray Davis. I mean, can you imagine him ever writing something as great as, say, "I Wish I Could Be Like David Watts"?

DEAN FRIEDMAN: Ariel (Lifesong).
One of the greatest love stories ever told. Lovely. Delightful. Heartbreaking. Like a cross between the affectionate sentimentality of "The Ugly Bug Ball" and sensitive Manhattan sensibility of Rona Jaffe's brilliant "The Last Chance". A treasure trove of little gems, this record . . .
"I took a shower and put on my best blue jeans, / I picked her up in my new VW, / She wore a peasant blouse with nothing underneath, / I said 'Hi', / She said, "I guess I am!" or *"I took her home and we watched some TV, / Annette Funicello and some guy going steady, / I started fooling around with the vertical hold, / We got the munchies and I made some spaghetti . . ."*
Sweet.

LINDA FLETCHER: Hush (Ariola)
Do you like Joplin? I don't know, I've never Joppled! Seriously kids, you'll all remember this Linda lass from *Get It Together*, the pop programme for us youngsters, where she got to do one old song a week in return for reading kiddies requests, introducing Child and singing the *Get It Together* theme tune with Uncle Roy. You remember how surly, embarrassed and annoyed Auntie Linda looked when subjected to this indignity, like some surrogate Maggie Bell marking an interminable cameo appearance in The Partridge Family. Here she gets to flex her raunch on that old Heavy Metal torch song originally done by Deep Purple or Black Sabbath, one of them, anyway, and it really is an an awful racket. On this showing she appears to think that volume = emotion; the more she let's rip the more she thinks our heartstrings will be putty in her sweaty brickie mitts. Awful, dear, awful.

GODLEY AND CREME: Sandwiches Of You (Mercury)
I really liked these two when they were the non-wimp half of 10CC back in the early part of this decade (my, time flies when you're enjoying yourself, doesn't it?) but now they just come across like a couple of spent forces for whom getting interviewed on *OGWT* is the highlight of the week. This breaks its neck trying to be really weird and whacky — flogging to death a food/sex analogy. Goodness, how original. The problem with today's 10CC (apart from the fact they sorely miss the genius of Jonathan King) is that their pretty tunes don't mean a thing without Godley and Creme's clever-cleverness and the latter's urbane Dorothy Parker/Fagan & Becker pundit-fun don't mean a hoot without a catchy little jungle rhythm wrapped around it. Real Dreadlock Holiday In The Sun stuff.

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ROCKERS TIME

YOUR REGGAE ROUNDUP

● RELEASES ●

WITH black American music ever more committed to pure disco for village people, it's been left to Jamaican artists to carry on the US 'soul' traditions of the '60s / early '70s — rhythmwise a little way different, cho', but the same emotional commitment, the same romantic themes (and sometimes the same songs) add up to the old formula of pure passion for feeling people.

See't: reggae is the soul music of today. It's no accident that it's increasingly a taproot of inspiration for modern white rockers just as R&B / Motown / Soul was to their predecessors.

Linval Thompson sings — and produces — in a variety of styles but for **'If I Follow My Heart' (Jet Star 12")** he opts for the pure tones and swooping, yearning phrasing developed by the likes of Sam Cooke and Smokey Robinson. The song, an old Dennis Brown tune, is pure tortured romance, as simple and catchy as the British cold, especially when set to a highly danceable double-drumbeat rhythm that serves for either stepping or smooching. A pity that when it comes to his turn **Prince Mohammed** can't talk up anything much by way of a toast; if current JA stars like Thompson, Brown, and Pat Kelley take their vocal style from the Cooke / Robinson / Ben E King school of soul, then perhaps the DJs are the equivalent of the James Brown / Wilson Pickett gotta-gotta school of grits 'n' grunt — and as often predictable.

The Heptones certainly started their lengthy career at the height of the '60s soul boom and have been singing in a Jamaican hybrid of The Impressions, Drifters etc ever since. Their latest, **'Losing You' (Third World 12")** shows their vocal talents are intact despite the loss of originator Leroy Sibbles from their line-up, though the number is but standard lovers rock issue (and correspondingly popular) while the flip, **'Mount Zion'**, is as ordinary as the title. At least there's no DJs to clutter up the dubs, which are lively enough.

The harmonies advanced by others of Jamaica's myriad vocal trios like The Royals, The Abyssinians, The Gladiators and The Royal Rasses owe less to America and more to a purely Jamaican tradition of tonal alchemy that often bewilders the alien ear and which can in truth sometimes degenerate into a slough of righteousness. Not that there's anything out of order about **The Royals 'If You Want Good' (Warrior 12")**, a fine sample of their work with lowkey but volatile dubs on both sides, but its downkey charm is unlikely to earn it the same success as **The Royal Rasses 'Unconventional People' (Arawak 12")** which deserves a mention more than Penny Reel's rave review last month if only because of its widespread popularity; I mean, Danny Baker has a copy on 12" so is that crossover appeal or what?

In the same line of Rastafarian vocal outfits come **Carlton And The Shoes,** who beside boasting one of the alltime great-names-for-groups and an Abyssinian as Carlton's brother, offer some of the most formidably individual harmonies in the western world. **'Better Days Are Coming' (Deb 12")** is an excellent sample of their

Back from Ethiopia, Bob Marley sports weathermen 'at for latest release and the camera of ADRIAN BOOT

talents, a righteous chant to liberty and equality that shimmers into an equally heavyweight dub. Music to meditate by. And if that's not enough the topside is **Junior Delgado's 'Trickster',** a breezy warning on feminine wiles well popular on the systems.

With **Delroy Wilson's 'Come Into Heaven' (Hawkeye 12")** and **Jackie Paris' 'There Is No Other' (Hawkeye 12")** we're back treading the shifting treacherous sands of lovers rock, in this case weighed down by a couple of mundane torch ballads. The Delroy number has been fulsomely praised in some quarters but to these ears it's as dismal as an empty disco, a hollow echo of past glories. Play 'Sarge' and see't. The Jackie Paris disc is just as wearisomely melodramatic though the b-side gets rescued by the Gussie Clarke production and sax solo that might find favour with 'Baker Street' fans

Of the growing army of UK reggae groups only **Fusion** have a new issue. **'Cold Outside' (Manic 12")** is easily the best number the group have at present and the highspot of their stage act though still tinged by the curse of worthiness. On the other hand, its relevance can't be questioned.

Pebbles' 'Positive Vibrations' (Arawak 7") is more UK reggae in a different fashion as Ranking Dread offers a drawling amiable talk-over, (an ickle way Big Youth style) of Errol Dunkley's monster hit of late '78 'Little Way Different'. Strictly Willesden style as the man runs down the average spectacle down at the club: *"Some come in dem 3.5 Rover, Some came in dem Toyota, Some come in dem Morris Marina, Some come in dem Cras[illegible]a — Mark four but dem still poor living on the sister round the corner ..."* Good humoured, good rocking, produced by Dennis Matumbi ...

In general though, UK companies seem to have lost interest in the humble 7", a shame since the average pre-release clearly offers more musical value for dunzer at £1.20 a hit than the average UK discomix does for £2, a serious thing ...

● PRE-RELEASES ●

TAKE any **Mikey Dread** title for example — and right now there's a whole gaggle of them crossing the pre-release counters by the score — and you've bagged more dubwise trickery than on anything else thus far. No doubt about it, Campbell — who habitually works with Carl Patterson and King Tubby — has emerged as the new wizard of dub. His whacky spoken / cut-up intros alone are worth the price of admission: *"Wake up Jonathan wake up it's Michael Campbell at the controls ..."* begins **'Robber's Roost' (40 Leg)** to the sound of snores, and you're plunged into a heavy rockers rhythm over which steam whistles, door chimes and sundry electronic effects float around in a mix the depth of Vesuvius.

'Parrot Jungle' (Dread At The Controls) takes the whole thing one crazed step further into truly surrealist realms of psychedreadikal dub, music to melt the tone controls of your hifi. **'African Anthem' (Dread At The Controls)** on the flip of **Rod Taylor's 'Imperial Majesty'** is much more straightforward while **'Barber Saloon' (Black And White)** displays the man's cut-from-old-leather vocal chords to good effect. All recommended to young mods as one of the highs of contemporary listening.

Augustus Pablo is another master of dub, albeit in a much more subtle — some would say boring — fashion. **'Sufferer's Choice' (Message)** is typical of Pablo's style, the unmistakeable whistful melodica weaving a mesmerising course over a balanced shuffling rhythm. No loopy sound effects bombing the scenery here — just the serene misty landscape so often suggested by Pablo titles ('East Of The River Nile', 'Java' etc).

Pablo is often a better producer than artist; his current teenage protege **Hugh Mundell** cleaned up with his 'Africa Must Be Free By 1983' set last year and **'Jah Says The Time Has Come' (Message)** continues where that left off; stately rhythm, righteous, prophetic lyrics beautifully sung with another top quality Pablo dub on the b-side. A talent to watch.

Maybe if **Bob Marley** and / or Island Records released singles like **'Rastaman Live Up' (Tuff Gong International)** over here, he'd be less misunderstood; the rock audience, especially *Rolling Stone* critics, seem to be under the misapprehension that these days he only records the likes of 'Is This Love'. Hard on the heels of 'Blackman Redemption' a couple of months back, this is Marley's best offering in ages — simple enough rocking stuff, but what a relief to hear the man away from the softcentre production, without Junior Marvin squirting flashy guitar over everything and without the increasingly formularised I Three on back-up vocals — here they're replaced by a slightly quirky two part male counterpoint that uplifts the mood and gives the disc its real identity. Dub is a typically sparse Tuff Gong affair.

Another perennial favourite, **Gregory Isaacs,** also has a new title, **'Soon Forward' (Taxi)** a characteristically classic and elegant reading of the 'soon come' theme pursued by Peter Tosh on his disastrous Strolling Bones elpee (and if only *he'd* put out his Jamaican singles here). Again, soul and vocal style are the order of the day — Isaacs isn't called 'the Cool Ruler' for nothing.

Among other rising items on the nation's pre-release chalkboards are **Sugar Minott's 'Leggo The Dread' (Quality),** a catchy understated story of the injustice of the ganga laws, fit to grace an LCC picnic; **Marcia Griffiths 'Stepping Out Of Babylon' (High Note)** a strident performance from one of the island's best female vocalists over a powerful bubbling Sonia Pottinger rhythm; **The Tamlins' 'Stars' (Taxi),** a lovers rock recycling of an old Eternals tune that gets the breathless falsetto touch; all moonlight onna balcony, grope inna Cortina.

In the heady, expensive world of pre-release discomixes, **Lloyd Park's 'Offically' (Joe Gibbs 12")** remains among the most popular, as seductive and palling as only a Gibbs discomix can be, with a fierce strident toast from rising talker **Ray I,** the weatherman himself. Still, I can't see him wresting the title of king talker from **Trinity,** who on **Cornell Campbell's 'Whenever You Need Me' (Thompson 12")** shows what the debased art of talking is all about, elevating the *"New Wave / New braves"* lick from Marley's mutant 'Punky Reggae Party' to exhilarating new-age heights — *"New ways / new times / new wonders"* — and mixing it all up with his dalliance with a certain 'Sister Lorna". With Cornell Campbell's soulful lead vocal lead, Linval Thompson producing, and a similar double-beat rhythm driving things along, *Rockers Time* is back where it started; with a heart full of soul.

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There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight (groan) ... Pictured in sauna cabin are (from left) Phil Lip, Dave Flash, Rich Tea, Laura, Mark Turner, Will Bennett. Pic: GEORGE BODNAR.

The Time Signatures They Are A-changin'

And that's no problem. But just try to wear a headscarf or Afghan coat. ESSENTIAL LOGIC bemoan the post-punk mentality to ADRIAN THRILLS.

"AND WHEN we played the Marquee someone walked out on us just because I was wearing a headscarf!

"What does something like that matter? I might go onstage in an Afghan coat . . . people are just so narrow-minded!"

The trenchant castigation of London's gig-goers comes from the lips of Lora Logic, frontperson and founder member of ten-gig-old Essential Logic, currently to be seen supporting a legion of bands — usually twice their age and with only a minute percentage of their talent — through the club dives of the capital.

"Punk was supposed to break down the barriers. But since punk established itself there've been even more barriers than before. Like you have to dress a certain way, play in a certain style."

Lora, splendiferous in paint-splattered electric blue raincoat with hessian sacking draped over the shoulder as a shawl, sits opposite me across a table littered with the previous night's bitter-stained beer mats.

We are in the dog-eared upstairs dressing room of the Moonlight Club, West Hampstead, where Logic are tonight supporting Sore Throat.

The other five Logicians (all male) gathered around the table nod in agreement.

"Things are a bit like they were before punk started," mutters Mark Turner, the band's glum, pessimistic bassist. "For most people it's just a case of music for pleasure these days . . . the people booking bands into places like the Marquee and the Nashville don't really give a fuck about the music."

Such is the present state of 'the circuit'.

Lora (aka Susan Whitby) is not without her historical importance, of course: as the original saxophonist in X-Ray Spex she was one of the first girls to gate-crash the then all-male domain of Anglopunk.

After meeting Poly Styrene (aka Marion Elliot) through a newspaper ad, she was an integral part of Spex from their first ever gig exactly two years ago at The Roxy (where else?) until just after the Virgin "Oh Bondage!" single.

The reason for her departure from the ranks of the germ-free was, ostensibly, a return to her studies in the sixth form — but those who figured on a clash with Poly would be closer to the mark.

"I was on the point of leaving Spex anyway," recalls Lora. "I was pretty much suppressed in that set-up . . . Poly stopped talking to me as soon as she knew I'd written a few songs of my own."

The extra year at school yielded only one A-level and saw one ill-advised musical flirtation — at the request of Jean Jacques, Lora contributed sax on The Stranglers' "Black And White" album.

More importantly, the year also saw the emergence of a deceptively low-key solo single on the Rough Trade label. Recorded "with just a few friends after four rehearsals", both songs, "Aerosol Burns" and "World Friction" are still included in Essential Logic's live set.

After the single, released to decidedly mixed reviews early last year, the next step was . . . logically . . . the formation of a band proper.

But Lora was determined to get her sums right second time around. Piecing together Essential Logic took six months and involved auditioning over a hundred prospective members.

The present line-up seems to be a settled one: there's Lora herself on vocals and sax, guitarists Will Bennett and Phil Lip, drummer Rich Thomson (another ex-Ray Spexer), Dave Flash on second sax and Mark Turner on bass.

Since their debut — supporting Sore Throat (again) at the Marquee in September — they have built a strong and varied set of 11 originals, the best of which, by my ready reckoning, are "Wake Up", "Alkaline Loaf", "Rat Alley" and a revamped "Aerosol Burns".

BUT THOSE expecting anything remotely akin to the souped-up heavy metal pop of Spex are in for some sort of shock: it's now February 1979 and the time signatures they are a-changing. Make no mistake on that count.

Essential Logic's sound is unorthodox and atmospheric, characterised by clattering reverberant guitars and Lora's wheezy vocals with a sleazy hem added by the two bleating saxes. But beyond their rebuff of the notion that a song must be played at the same tempo and pace throughout, they are not 'experimental'.

They perform with a naive charm, mischievous wit, honesty and soul that transcends classification.

As saxist Dave says: "I think people should be able to enjoy our music. I don't think it's pretentious People have just got to make an effort to listen to it."

"The music might not be accessible on first listening," Lora adds. "But a lot of things that are accessible at first soon get boring.

"Any music that isn't just blam blam blam has got to be inaccessible to a certain degree. I'm not just going to write songs for people to bang their heads to.

"But we're not trying to alienate ourselves — you just have to see us a few times.

"Before I formed the band I had certain ideas about how it would sound, but things have turned out very different . . . much better. Really, it's been shaped by the people who are in it. I just never thought it would sound as good as it does."

At the moment all the songs are Lora's — but this is open to change. On lyrical content, however, the singer is evasive.

"I don't like explaining the lyrics. It's up to the individual what they mean — you can talk as much as you want, but in the end it's down to the music.

"The first song I wrote was 'Rat Alley'. It's about The Roxy. It was very relevant at the time. At the time The Roxy was a fantastic place for a new band, as Spex were then. People should just accept it for what it was.

"There are no political messages but I don't just write lyrics for the sake of it. I don't think you can separate them from the songs as a whole. They just convey unusual messages and moods."

How important is the sax to the Logical sound?

"Very. There are a lot of ways that the sax hasn't been used before. Like, most rock sax players are only used during quick instrumental breaks.

"The saxophone has always been a suppressed instrument . . . suppressed for too long, like me!"

Her efforts in establishing the group aside — and she is at pains to emphasise that Essential Logic are very much A Band — Lora has recently been hard at work un-suppressing her talents in other ways.

Of prime import is her work on the forthcoming Red Crayola album, being produced by Rough Trade svengali Geoff Travis. Lora contributes sax on two tracks, and members of Pere Ubu are also featured in instrumental roles.

Then there's the imminent Essential Logic single, "Wake Up" — label as yet undecided.

"It's the most representative song for someone who hasn't seen the band yet," says Lora logically. "It's not our best song, but it gives you an idea of what to expect. It's indicative of the stuff we do.

"If you start out doing what you want to do then you should be all right when you sign to a big record company," she adds, ever optimistic.

"The worst thing that can happen is when you try to gain acceptance by playing music that you don't really enjoy — then you really muck yourself up."

Q.E.D.?

MUSIC OF A DIF

And my message to the people
Is don't tie me to the steeple
Don't put me with the stocks and in your market square.

AS I DREARILY trudged towards Kevin Coyne's small terraced home in Clapham, South London, to prepare what felt like merely this year's broadcast, to accompany this year's awed album review of the merits and mights of this acutely original and imaginative communicator, there was a shameful feeling of slight futility.

The futility was at simply being about to repeat to the unsure, uncommitted and uncaring that Coyne is the most pertinent and penetrative, the most respectable and realistic of our rock people.

It can get a little monotonous. Does any one listen?

Last year the *NME* team was Monty Smith and Nick Kent; Smith acclaiming Coyne's hard "Dynamite Daze" album, Kent bemoaning the lack of popular acceptance and heralding the presence of a rare, consistent talent in a concise feature.

This year's team is Angus MacKinnon, who astutely appreciated Coyne's beautiful and touching new album "Millionaires And Teddy Bears" last week, and me.

I trudge up his garden path thinking of all the obvious numbing descriptions . . . "honest, direct, passionate, angry" . . .

The thing is, life changes, Coyne with it more than most, and it's not right to ignore him or abuse him, to get trapped by vague terminology like "weird", "cult", "lost his chance", to fall foul of commercial considerations. Coyne doesn't need to be sold.

The man is an artist, an important reporter within the 20th Century whose musical documentation consists of accurate and absorbing depictions of inadequacies, inadequates, of people and more people.

He captures our time by concentrating on extremes of comfort and despair without distortion or daftness. He uses "rock" practically and intelligently, recognising its importance and opportunities with straightforward passion.

"Rock is my life, I'm afraid. I was there at the start and I'm still here now. It's not just the culture, it's the rhythm . . . it's folk music."

He's not a failure because he is a "cult" but a success because he can say and do so much and still make a living. If his records sold in vast quantities it'd be nice, but it's not essential. He has attracted a large enough following, especially abroad where audiences accept his craft without being suspicious of its "lack of compromise" to supply economic buoyancy; Coyne says what he wants to say — and to a considerably larger audience than many artists of his awesome stature do.

"I get a response which is very gratifying and can often be very moving . . . to have people love you. I want to be loved — doesn't everybody?"

And what he says is authentic, relevant, poetic, cutting and positive. The optimism for humanity that illuminates even the blackest corners of his bleakest songs is a lovely and inspiring thing.

His infectious conviction, cheery idealistic manner, his hunger for life and experience, the nature of his sensitive and clear translations are worth writing about if only ten people are converted at a time.

In short, Kevin Coyne is a unique and constructive talent totally independent of rock's routines and rigidities, whose motivations are intuitive, hopeful, helpful and nothing to do with figures or charts. This feature is not a commercial. It is a reminder. Kevin Coyne is still here. He will not go away. The feeling of futility soon departs.

COYNE WELCOMES me warmly, his 12-year-old son sprawling over the carpet doing homework during a strike-enforced day off school. He melts my momentary, misguided embarrassment at feeling part of a conveyor belt of journalists who turn up on his door step every few months to say the same old things.

"Well, it's not turning out the same old things for me . . . It's like getting to know people. That's how I see it. I don't see too much of the English press these days. I'm often abroad . . . there seems to be a lot of interest over here at the moment . . . it comes and goes. I've seen it all before."

But at the moment he is an unusually strong and belonging position, not only because of the continuing strength of his music, but also because of his ideals and insistence on individualism and impulsive expression — attitudes and angst that predated and complemented the essential spirit of the punk turmoil.

If punk wasn't simply a pose, a gob, a pogo, and a gripe, but a cry of indignation, absurdity and frustration, then Coyne was a proper prototype.

And now, as punk expands into something significant, as hordes of individuals and groups find room and necessity to say something positive with energy and simplicity, Coyne is no longer alone. No longer an eccentric freak. His individualism is part of a whole vibrant mass of individualism shaking the foundations of the numbing rock business that once or twice threatened to suffocate him.

Coyne suddenly fits in, without budging an inch, and how!

"Punk didn't really teach me anything. It was just a confirmation of my principles, really. I've got a few punk records, and somebody was playing a whole string of them the other day, and to me they all sound like me!"

Coarse yet sensitive?

"Oh yeah. The lyrics are very powerful and the simplicity of it is something I approve of. I mean. I'm not Beethoven . . . I like playing in a certain way, and it's their lack of concern for the guitar, the way they get inside the bloody thing and give it a bloody hammering . . . I'm into that. Always have been. I could totally identify with the punk thing. Rage and anger, fair enough, but also telling someone that you are articulate, that you do think, that you don't walk around like a zombie, that you don't accept the endless stream of media nonsense, that you are aware of what the *Daily Mirror* is up to, and you are aware that where you live isn't right and could be better.

"I don't feel I'm working in a vaccuum any more. It's gratifying to hear people getting angry, and not necessarily singing in a cliched way — and singing with the accent they were brought up with . . . not like Jasper Carrot, but with a bit of rage, y'know *using* this record industry and the media, and making it work instead of it taking them.

"For me, Johnny Rotten or John Lydon is the most exciting thing since Little Richard. I'm glad he's had such an influence on people, because it's really a questioning thing all the time . . . Saying this won't DO!"

Lydon, and people like Godard and Perry and others, share a basic motivation with Coyne.

"It's a basic need, and more than anything a need to communicate, to say I exist. Here I am. I exist. But to take it further . . . to an audience You exist!

"I try desperately to communicate my optimism and my feeling that I'm here. I'm an individual. I exist as this and it's within YOU to do the same — not necessarily go on stage, but to give voice to whatever you really are rather than what you're told you are."

This need has driven him on through ten years of ignorance, scorn and misjudgement. A classic Coyne quote, lifted from the homely Nottingham *Liquorice* magazine, and used in Alan Jones' taut sleeve notes for the double live album "In Living Black And White", supplies a forceful focus of the essence of his ambition:

"I don't see the point in doing anything unless you are going to say something, unless you're going to try and communicate, or even instruct in some things, to share or pass on a feeling that hasn't reached other people. To encapsulate certain feelings for people that they haven't been able to express."

Pompous, perhaps — but honest.

Coyne genuinely feels he has been through more, seen more, understands more, is more curious and compassionate, and essentially more sensitive than most.

And the density, detail and realism of his recorded work proves him right — records that are concerned with a multitude of living, breathing people, individuals who seem cuddly, yet with sharp edges, just like his 'childlike' drawings and sketches.

"I have the greatest sympathy for people. They're the greatest influence on what I do. I couldn't survive without people. I need people and I love people. I always believe the best in them rather than the worst.

"I've distinctly said that on the new album, although there are some very sharp comments too. Actually there's a track called 'The World Is Full Of Fools' and someone said to me that I'm too soft, that there are some really bad and evil people. They're not just fools, they're very evil. What about Hitler? He wasn't just a fool.

"In a sense, obviously, I agree with that, but when you get to know people individually there's always some redeeming factor that draws a compassion in me. Sometimes it's very hard work believing in people. They often let you down. But I persist."

His records revolve deceptively cosily and plain chillingly around the apparent opposites of relationships, loneliness, delusions.

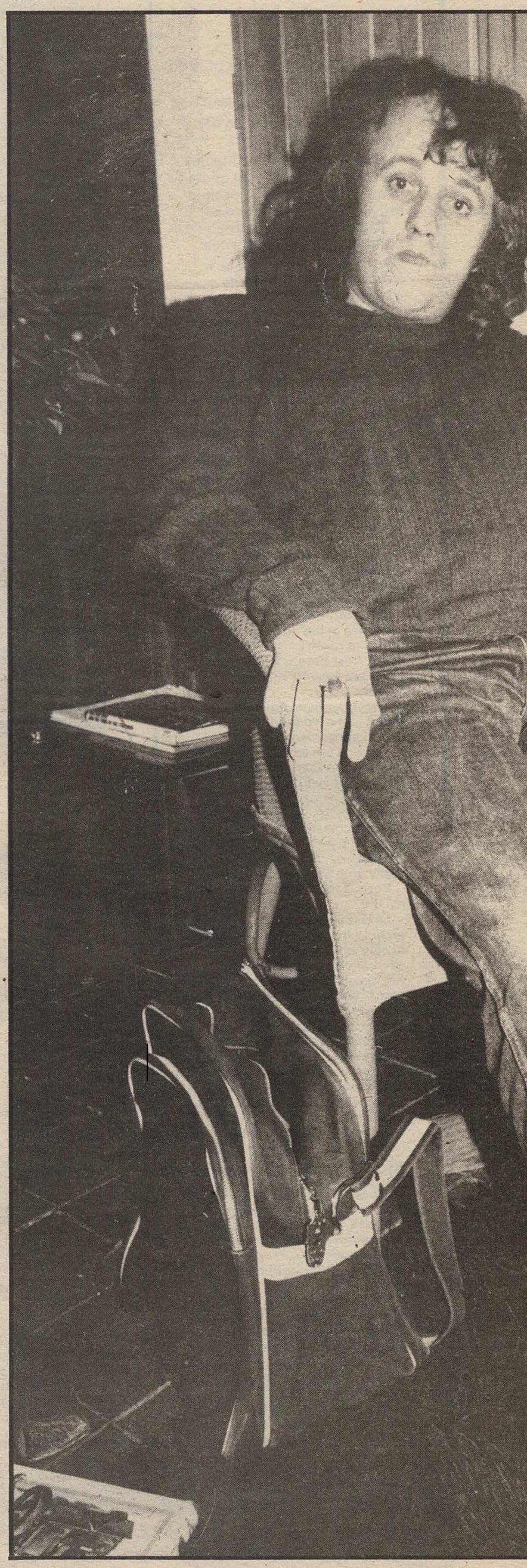
"I can see the dangers and madness in the relationships some people form. People can cling together out of loneliness. That's the eternal thing. There are lonely people everywhere. I'm really intrigued by people. Their pain concerns me.

"I can be lonely myself — there are many times when I feel totally cut off or that people don't understand."

His records are forged from deep experience:

"I feel I have experience to offer people. Experiences just from living around here, from the past, from working in institutions, travelling around, performing, meeting a never-ending variety of human beings."

KEVIN COYNE is 35. He's been making solo records for ten years. Disregarding the two Siren albums cut in the late '60s — dance albums, still playable — his first vinyl cry was the deranged, depressive "Case History", a staggering album that initiated an unequalled run of four of the most caustic, determined and unexpurgated records in rock — "Case History", "Marjory Razorblade", "Blame It On The Night", and "Matching Head And Feat".



If you wait long enough yo

Well-respected artist and cult figure KEVIN COYNE, f

finds he has much in common with punk and the N

FFERENT COYNE

Pic: TOM SHEEHAN

The life, the fantasy, the musical development, the attack of Coyne's four records stands alone. They are raw wounds streaking the face of rock's feeble-mindedness.

"Case History" is a stark, hysterical retch forced by the four years he cared and campaigned for the destitute and depressed, with possessed vocals and uncontrollable acoustic guitar. A massive statement of intent.

"And when you say who? you know it's going to be me/Watch out people here I'm coming, here I'm running/Climbing your stairway, your airway to the stars/So I don't mind if you pretend to be blind/Maybe tomorrow you'll alleviate my mind/Aah watch me now 'cos into the tangles I go/And my message to you people/Is love you all you people/And I'll find my own stocks/And I'm digging my own market square."

Coyne soon discovered it was even harder than he anticipated.

Despite the power and accessibility of the album he swiftly stumbled into a bleak and messy and possibly fatal nothing.

"I thought 'Case History' was good. In comparison to what was going down at the time, it was very strong. But you couldn't even buy it anywhere for a start. Somewhere along the line it got strangulated. And it was a bit hard to come back from that.

"I did a tour of Europe with the Dandelion people — Lol Coxhill, Medicine Head and other worthies — and it was very successful in its own way, and I thought I was getting through, but I came back to England, as has happened so many times, and there was nothing.

"No mention of the album, no reviews, nothing.

"I got very upset. I cracked at that point. I didn't go down but I became very sad and self absorbed for a long time . . . something I try and avoid now. I thought, what's the point, they don't deserve it. But fortunately you have people around you who help and I was lucky in that sense.

"Virgin came along, and I was determined to go back into the studio and show everybody. I still had a lot to say, still have, and I wanted to get it down. If it was the Pistols were angry, shite, I certainly was when I made 'Marjory Razorblade'."

It showed.

"Marjory Razorblade" is one of rock's natural classics, possessing more musical colour and more scope than its bare predecessor. A double album, it's a tumbling, jumbly world of oddness, grossness and tenderness packed with Joycean jeering and dazzling Cooper Clarke detail, full of perversity and seediness.

"Razorblade" extended and hardened the subject and potential of "Case History", challenged definitions and fear, confirmed Coyne's concern for a variety of victims, his anger at injustice, his disgust at inhumanity, and revealed a compelling, precious style for delivering his rage with a sense of the ridiculous, the profound and, most winningly, with an unavoidable sense of optimism.

The music was perfectly adaptable — flexible rock and blues — and Coyne's voice soulful and agile. The atmosphere was musty and evocative.

All this was taken even further with "Blame It On The Night", his most delightful and disturbing collection with the possible exception of the new record. It chided and chilled, but somehow also smiled.

"But people always said, oh he has *it* but he doesn't quite fit in . . . or they tried to push me as another great white soul singer, or bought in Van Morrison and Beefheart . . . it can still happen."

For "Matching Head And Feet", Coyne's third album, still for me containing some of his most tragic and tender portrayals, a straight rock band of session musicians was assembled — theoretically to supply him with power. But in unimaginative, orthodox manner, they eroded all the edges of the songs away, cluttering them with disrupting detail.

Coyne feels this is where a rot set in, and by the time of the dull, uneven "Heartburn" it had eaten away all the grit and grain, the sparseness and skittishness that his songs rely on.

"You can tell by the title it wasn't up to much," he grins.

Coyne remembers this period as the worst since those days immediately after "Case History".

"With the band I was just sort of losing my grip on my own individual things — playing a guitar and singing, which is what I do best. I was going on stage almost as the leader of a rock band with all the classical postures . . . I got to feel a bit like Joe Cocker.

"I was getting to feel a bit mindless, like going through the processes. I felt very depressed. I haven't even got a copy of 'Heartburn'. My thing about albums is that they should read like diaries and I felt that the diary lost a few pages during that period. What saddens me is that some of the songs were good. But I didn't really sit down and think about it like I usually do. I felt very tired . . .

"I got the impression that people were saying to me now we don't want anymore quirly things, off the wall things, which is my speciality really. I got trampled.

"I wasn't strong enough to resist it, though no-one was really forcing me. No one has ever really forced me. It was just me losing concentration. I became sidetracked. Not really by the business . . . the business has only affected me occasionally — the machinations of it 'we must sell records, we must be successful" and 'this has to be the one'.

After all that it was wonderful to take the first stumbling steps back to reality.

IN LATE 1975 Coyne met his close friend, manager and co-producer Bob Ward who immediately recognised all the problems that Coyne himself had failed to recognise.

The live double album, "In Living Black And White", successfully sealed that first Virgin period, a dramatic chronological introduction to Coyne's world, with his emphatic on-stage personality dominating so that the record seems less like the Kevin Coyne Band Live Double it might well have been.

It contains all the anxiety and anguish, ambiguity and audacity pitifully lacking on "Heartburn" and reluctantly holding on in "Matching Head And Feat". It balances the idiosyncracy with the power, is an excellent document of the depth of Coyne's genius, and was a suitable stopping off and thinking point.

It was the time success was most likely to intercept Coyne — when he wasn't aware of its complexity. But he's ready for it now.

"I still feel my time will come, and I know just how to handle it. Around that 'Heartburn' time to some extent the 'Biz' was taking away my will.

"I never want to get to that stage again — where loads of people are coming in with wads of ideas and production things. To some extent you have to get production right, but when it takes over and the vocal performance is not so important, and the clarity of what you're saying gets lost, then there's something wrong."

Would he go through the same traumas again; is he prepared for another period of stagnation?

"I do believe that without any pain or stress some of the will to carry on disappears. That happens all the time in the music business.

"But I know that my purpose, give or take a few periods of depression, will never end. I know more positively now what I want to do than I've ever done. I don't want anything to get in the way of it.

"I love singing. I really look forward to it. But there was a period where I wasn't enjoying it and the last two years has seen a change in that, and has seen a change in my personality because of it."

Aided by Bob Ward, his wife Lesley (they have two children) and people in general Coyne has come back with two intriguing collections, both lively and determined enough to suggest that he has commenced another run of unparalleled provocation and insight.

The tones and moods of "Dynamite Daze" and "Millionaires And Teddy Bears" are distinctly different from earlier edgier and more eerie works, but still possess levels of emotion and evocation that are exceedingly rare in rock (or anything else).

These newer cries are more ironic, softer with ugliness subtly displaced by an equally effective yearning. The harshness is discreet, his intentions still to expose but in a warmer fashion. As Angus MacKinnon noticed last week, Coyne has the ability to shamelessly deliver the innermost emotions and pain — and that's often more difficult than screaming with rage.

"I'm closer to a truly optimistic view of life, rather than overlaying it with possibly misleading depressive elements. I'm not by nature a particularly depressive person . . . well, I am and I'm not . . . I can go from black to white like anyone else, but I would hope that I could give some indication of better things to come for people in the future."

ALL THE THINGS Coyne does are independent. Apart from his own music he's composed the opera "Babble", which concerns the sinister side of relationships and appeared in the film *Institution*, which superficially deals with loneliness. He is also preparing a one-man show of original songs about Elvis called "Fat Old Heroes" ("That's not necessarily derogatory").

Roadwork, principally in Europe, pays for his living.

"Nobody supports what I do. I don't earn vast royalties, although I may yet do. I'm very concerned that I keep a working attitude to things, I try and work on something everyday.

"I feel encouraged to do so by the fact that I am free. Optimistic? Yes I am very optimistic. If I died tomorrow I would feel I'd done something. And that's rathter a nice. feeling."

KEVIN COYNE is a remarkable person. His work remains honest and has a sense of purpose. His view of humanity is deeply educational, the way he's survived heartening.

His old music snapped and bit with ragged, rugged realism; his new music throbs with romantic realism containing a sting and is probably the most effective and attractive, without being empty, of all his work.

Coyne understands the small things in life that make it worthwhile. He entertains. He provokes.

He really just wants to be your friend — and give you some advice. And, y'know, in commercial terms, in critical terms, in creative terms, anyway you want to look at it, this is only just the beginning.

u come back into fashion . . .
proboscis unadorned by safety pins, nevertheless
New Wave. PAUL MORLEY draws the comparisons.

HORSLIPS

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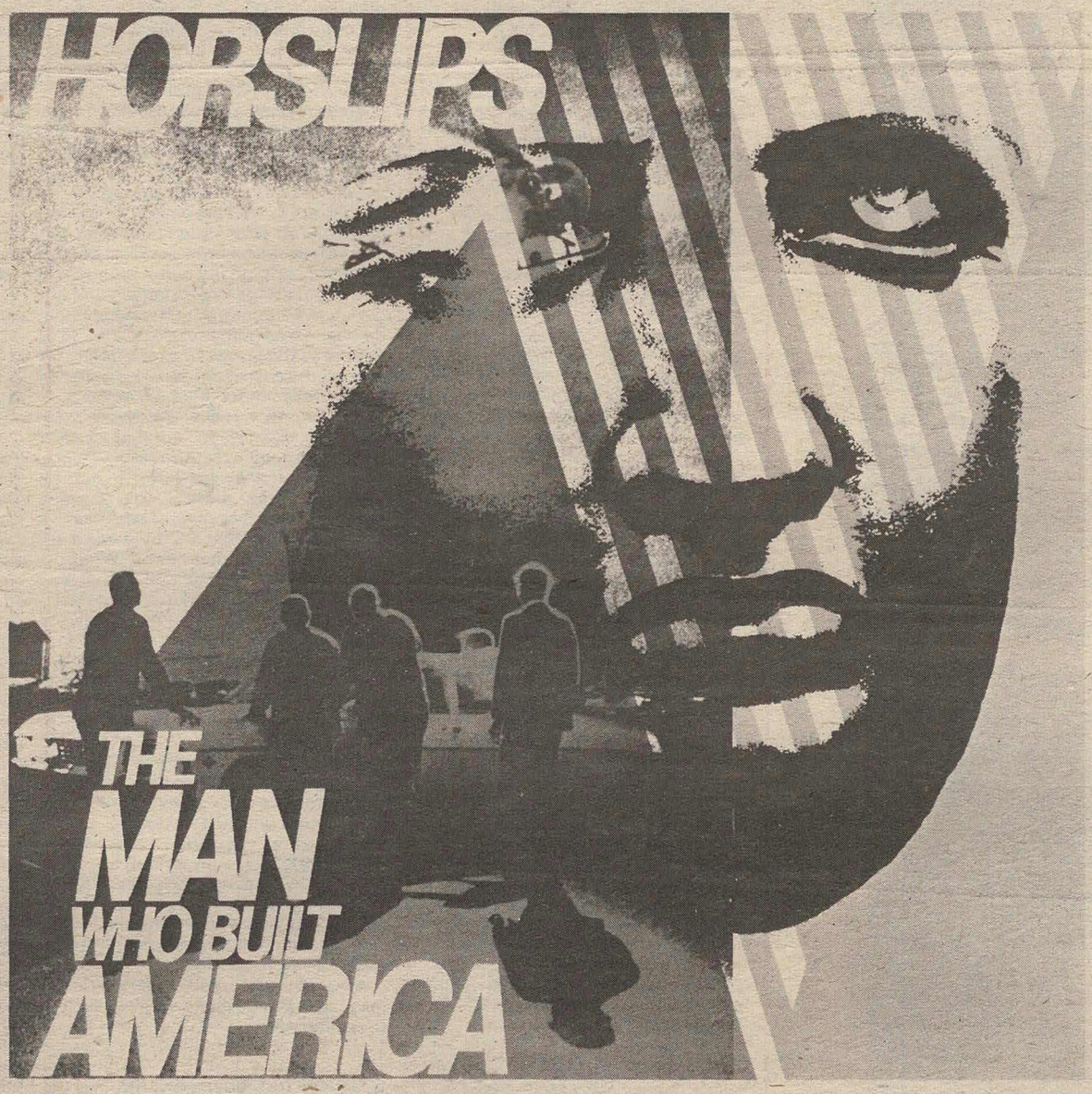

See Horslips live on tour!

The 'American' tour

JANUARY 31st.	**Leicester** Polytechnic.
FEBRUARY 2nd.	**Hammersmith** Odeon.
3rd.	**Manchester** Apollo.
4th.	**Birmingham** Hippodrome.
5th.	**Exeter** University.
7th.	**Liverpool** University.
8th.	**Edinburgh** Usher Hall.
9th.	**Glasgow** Apollo.
10th.	**Newcastle** Polytechnic.
11th.	**Redcar** Coatham Bowl.
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ALBUMS

"Listen, for the last time, we're not Australians." *Pic: Wendi E. Lombardi*

Down At The Disco Wagnerian Strains Stomped

THE BEE GEES
Spirits Having Flown
(RSO)

Smirk at the towering spectre of mellifluously lush piffle, the garish omnipotence of their clout, the ungainly vision of their hair and overbite all you want — it's your prerogative — but dare even attempting to convince me you weren't seduced by at least one of the gargantuan volume of hits the Brothers Gibb saw fit to set 1978 on its head with, and I'll warrant you're either a clumsy liar or else deaf as a post.

I don't care whether it was the upbeat stuff (generally regarded as the more aesthetically acceptable Bee Gee fodder to own up to, uh, tolerating) or those irresistible gooey ballads that held sway over the airwaves — but only hearts and feet of stone could be left unaffected by the imperious strut of "Stayin' Alive" or the mesmeric irrepressibility of "Grease" (Frankie Valli may have sung it but it was as much a Bee Gee undertaking as anything else bearing the tacky trio's monicker) or heart-strafing trash like "How Deep Is Your Love", "Too Much Heaven" and, best of all, the killing "Emotion".

I mean, Jesus, these Gibb boys were so hot last year they could even afford to toss pearls of their creation to the likes of relative has-been nobodies like Samantha Sang (the perfect female Bee Gee clone, as it turned out), artistes in struggling limbo like Yvonne Elliman and Tavares, not to mention kinfolk like Andy Gibb (whose sorely underrated "Shadow Dancing" cut all the Sylvesters and Chics right out of the running for the numero uno disco 45 of '78 as far as these ears were concerned).

It's virtually redundant to even ruminate on the Gibbs' total trashing of the rock business — except to note that the sudden release of this their latest album doesn't even appear to require any grand fanfare on RSO's part to press the point home. No media campaigns, no TV advertising in the pipeline — "Bee Gees records are advertising themselves", as an RSO person succinctly stated.

In strategic terms, the release of "Spirits" makes perfect sense. In superficial terms, coming as it does hard on the heels of the "Sgt. Pepper" debacle, jinxing an otherwise unbroken winning streak, it provides those salivating millions with more high-grade variations on the same winning set of formulas — whilst the chosen time of its emergence coincides uncannily with what has become to be regarded as a quiet, sluggish period for the business, wherein little else of any real competitive merit is actually around to do combat.

As to what lies waiting in the grooves — "Spirits" provides no radical departures from what has gone before since 1976's "Jive Talkin'" procured the Gibb trio that desperately needed introduction to a second phase of public interest. "Talkin'" granted them a contemporary niche, the blueprint for a formula that, hard-bitten veterans their lean years had transformed them into, they leapt at.

In the past — from their professional christening in '66 and '67 as teenage proteges garnering a premature success under the huge shadow of The Beatles — being prolific was never (and still isn't) a problem. Pretentiousness was however — check virtually any of their lyrics from that era for an all too cloying reminder of this. The Bee Gees always tried too hard, they always seemed unbearably immature, and their downfall from that first savouring of success was too inevitable.

Their return to a mass favour, sparked by thorough market research and doubtless instigated by Stigwood himself, produced a drastically reshaped Bee Gees. They swiftly slotted their style into the burgeoning field of contemporary R&B/soul with a heavy emphasis on the disco boom, conforming at once to its dance-fetish dictates and the majestic sappiness of such as The Stylistics (an all too obvious seminal influence) for ballad content. At the same time the Bee Gees introduced an identity of their own. This was their real coup. As lyricists they'd always been clumsy, pretentious and feckless, but the genre they chose allowed them to adeptly camouflage this and concentrate instead on their premier talent, that of being first-rate 'pop' tunesmiths.

Fats Domino once stated to the effect that the one real essential to a song's success was the strength of its melody — no more, no less. The Gibbs would doubtless agree.

"Spirits Having Flown" continues all the traditions of recent Bee Geedom whilst subtly broadening certain aspects and pinpointing with an all too stunning accuracy the basics that have won them their current commercial omnipotence. They certainly have no pressing competition among their peers. Abba haven't produced one song as audaciously powerful as any of those here since "Knowing Me, Knowing You" back in mid-'77 whilst old warhorses like Elton John and Paul McCartney are doing nothing more than rest on laurels.

Fundamentally, "Spirits" spotlights the intertwining of the Gibbs' two aces. The melodies are primarily, I'd warrant, the work of leader Barry Gibb. As with all great 'pop', Gibb knows instinctively how to construct tunes that impinge to the fullest extent on your consiousness. He tailors and streamlines the dominant lead-up verses, slides into the often unbearably nagging chorus, often tossing in all manner of added melodic counterpoint and, if that wasn't enough, conjures up a middle-eight of such genuine inventiveness that the song scores an immediate musical detente.

This strategy is highlighted most accessibly in the ballads, particularly "Reaching Out" — all too reminiscent of Gibb's own Sammantha Sang masterpiece "Emotion" — where that idiosyncratic equation of mellifluous bathos and a truly affecting melody forge a song that forces one to awkwardly swoon at the same instant as one secretly reviles oneself for being so unutterably suckered in by the tawdriness of it all. If only Thom Bell — from whom Gibb obviously took inspiration — could be this sharp, this prolific.

In keeping with the "Saturday Night Fever" formula, "Spirits" grants equal time to ballads and dance numbers. The latter disappoint mildly due to the absence of a successor to the brilliant "Stayin' Alive". In its stead, the first track on side two — "Search-Find" — attempts a little too crassly to follow in "SA" 's footsteps without attaining a fraction of the latter's momentum.

Similarly, "Living Together" has its cross-references to "Alive", though it's taken at a more leisurely pace and is constructed around a moodily domineering bass line over which the threesome partake in some effective counterpart gymnastics.

By the time "I'm Satisfied" arrives — straight after — one longs for something of stabbing danceability consequence (like "You Should Be Dancing").

"Spirits" in toto is not quite the perfect Bee Gees album. "Until" sounds too much like Stevie Wonder to transcend the debt, for example, making side two something of a non-event.

But the first side, from the obvious next single "Tragedy" — which tacks Robin's ill-becoming hysterical falsetto on a masterful melody and arrangement reminiscent of Spector's quasi-Wagnerian "River Deep" — through the exquisite schmaltz of "Too Much Heaven" to the irrepressibly nagging hooks on "Love You Inside Out", "Reaching Out" and the title track, one is left in absolutely no doubt that this is quintessentially epic pop.

As awesome as they are tawdry, as ingenious as they are slick, Bee Gee records are very possibly the best pop music around right now. (The Gibbs deserve a medal anyway for creating disco-related music without sounding crassly condescending — no mean achievement).

Now — if only they could stop bro' Robin intoning like a neutered hyena.

Nick Kent

Down In The Dumper Something Stirred

GENERATION X
Valley Of The Dolls
(Chrysalis)

"Into the valley of the dolls / Went the gang of four."

And when the smoke cleared, some poor sod has to write the obituary, I suppose? Well, I picked the short straw — but I think I detect signs of life among the confusion.

Not much, mind. Gen X seem to view rock'n'roll as a battlefield — they're obsessed with rock as rebellion and king rocker shoot-outs — and by god it doesn't seem to come easy to them. You can't help wondering why they bother with the uphill struggle; it's painful to witness Billy Idol picking his way around some of his lines like they were going to bite him . . .

At least in the old days Gen X used to play fast enough for you to ignore the casualties strewn in their path — the mis-shapen melodies, the inane lyrics, the guitar gross-outs. In fact, in the light of Martin Rushent's heavy-handed treatment of the first album and Ian Hunter's equally misconceived melodrama on this set, those first two singles under the aegis of Phil Wainman ("Your Generation" and "Wild Youth") sound like halcyon days — poppy, zippy, and above all, *tidy*.

Now, Gen X are just a mess of contradictions. their basic lightweight pretty-boy stance clashes with their new Hunterish bent for convoluted song constructions, all dramatic pauses and too many words. At the same time Bob Andrews' over-amped guitar soloing ("the '80s first guitar hero", according to the press release — though it's really just minor league Kossoff minus the sensitivity) imposes a macho stamp that Idol's shaky vocalising can't hope to match.

Ian Hunter and Billy Idol exhibit overwhelming enthusiasm at the Gen X playback. *Pic: Rick Mann*

Lyrically they exist in an imbecilic fantasy world: *"Racing wild with the radios blasting out 'Ready Steady Go'/As we rip through the charts crashing like angels at the end of rock's rainbow."* Huh? The conceit is laughable.

Elsewhere the streets run wild with glamorous, vibrant youth, while the "gallant four" act out their rock warrior fantasies onstage, igniting the audience to peaks of ecstasy. Next time you see some drunken skinhead grab Billy Idol's mike at some flea-bitten, depressing venue, remember that the singer thinks he's fighting the forces of darkness and inspiring the heaving mob with visions of paradise . . .

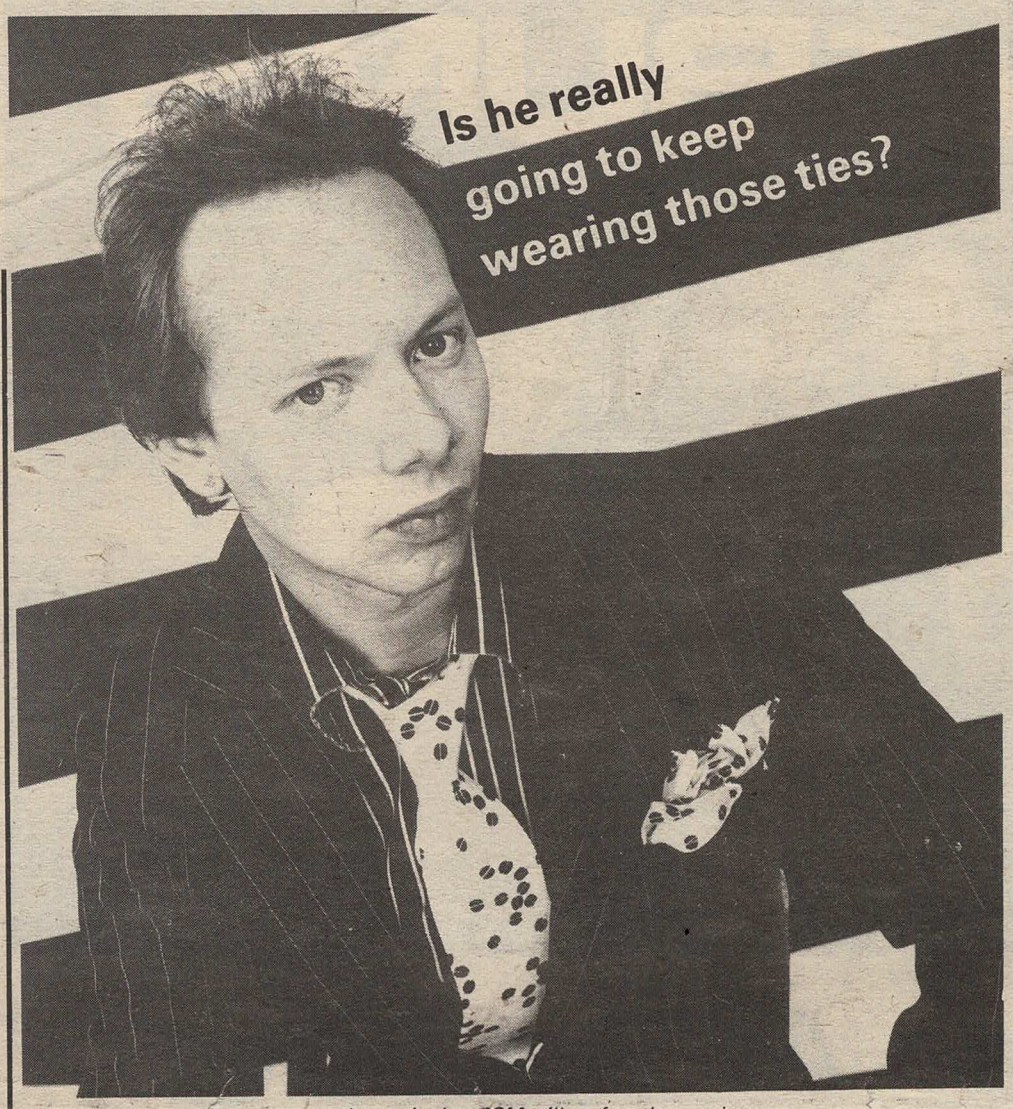
In a way it's quite touching. Andrews with his guitar hero fantasy, Tony James as jet-set rock star, Idol creating and (to be fair) consciously sharing visions of weekend wish-fulfilment for "Friday's Angels."

The guitar heroes and jet-setters we can do without, but I do respect Billy Idol's honesty and involvement. When he writes about a kid dressing up *("Mum and dad think you're a maniac / To walk the streets dressed up like that")* or going to the flicks *("I saw the universe in flames — But it's always the same like Citizen Kane / You end up with nothing and you leave for home")*, he's not being condescending; his own fantasies are so transparent, just in his appearance, that it's credible.

Which is why I don't want to write an obituary.

Pity about the music.

Phil McNeill



Joe Jackson models a more modern print but CSM still prefers the music.

JOE JACKSON
Look Sharp! *(A&M)*

Joe Jackson is a contender: he's fast, tough and he doesn't mess around. At a time when the orthodox powers-that-be in the rock business are geared to start acknowledging then pushing artists round about the time that they put out their third albums, this may be something of a disadvantage.

"Look Sharp!" is an impressively authoritative debut album written, sung and played in a manner that suggests that Jackson has had enough time to discard approaches that don't work and to get stylistic excesses and false starts out of his system before going into the studio.

The album's title and cover (a photograph of Jackson's feet encased in a pair of white side-lace Denson winklepickers that are, unfortunately, not nearly as cool as he evidently thinks they are) suggest an obsession with style. The style adopted within resembles a parallel-universe alternate take on the first Elvis Costello album. The ringing, contoured pop melodies, the jaundiced, sceptical lyrics and the crisp vocals recall the Big EI, with the important proviso that Joe Jackson seems to be resisting hostility and alienation rather than first succumbing to and then finally cultivating these particular symptoms in the spectacular (no pun intended, honest) and disturbing manner demonstrated on "My Aim Is True."

Three basic strains seem to have been boiled down into the music of Jackson and his band: the melodic, crafted group pop of the mid-'60s, the angular, metallic sound of the post-punk late '70s and the white reggae-rock which is rapidly becoming as distinct from its origins as the old post-Stones British R&B was from proper Chicago blues.

The band pivots around Graham Maby's punching, jostling bass with Gary Sanford's sparse, spitting rhythm guitar and Dave Houghton's slightly over-cautious drumming as a counterpoint. Jackson himself contributes occasional piano (which is fine when he rocks out and increasingly shaky when he tries to get jazzy or atonal) and mouth harp (wheezy and slapdash).

The resulting sound is forceful and decisive without resorting to steamroller tactics except on the frenetic "Throw It Away" which ends the first side in a manner unfortunately summed up all too accurately by its title. It's sad that too many bands attempt to disguise an overly slight song by pulling out all the stops. The outcome is that the song is completely swamped and nothing much emerges exept a thrash.

It's a rare miscalculation. Elsewhere on the album it's the songs that count, and the band do what's necessary to get Jackson's songs over, rather than trample on the material to get instrumental heroics across.

Joe's polka dots definitely don't cut it — luckily, his vocals do.

Despite taking fashionable whacks at supermarkets ("(Do The) Instant Mash") and the hideous excesses of Fleet Street ("Sunday Papers"), Jackson's main theme is L-U-R-V-E, either lost or — worse still — sought but never attained. His bitterness is aimed at the girls who reject him (either right off the bat despite his cool threads or later on after he's put an emotional investment into the relationship) and at the "Happy Loving Couples" and "Fools In Love" who innocently and infuriatingly flaunt their bliss at poor lonely Joe.

In "Is She Really Going Out With Him?" he can't believe that his ex and all those fantastic girls he sees from his window are going out with guys who seem like complete and utter bozos. In "Pretty Girls" he goes for a walk in the town centre and gets driven crazy by all these amazing women who don't seem to fancy him a lot. In "Happy Loving Couples" he gets reminded of his own loneliness by *"happy loving couples (who) ain't no friends of mine."* Towards the end of the track he gets so emotional that he can't even retain enough control to *sing*; instead he launches into a berserk monologue about couples in "identical white poloneck sweaters" reading copies of *Ideal Homes* before realising that he's gone over the top and cutting off the track with a terse "right, that's enough" and catapulting into "Throw It Away" (yeah, well, that number is a thrash but it's an *exhilarating* thrash for at least the first minute or so on record and it'd probably be the killer dance number of a live set).

He states his case more poignantly in "Fools In Love": *"Fools in love, they think they're heroes / because they get to feel more pain / fools in love, I think they're zeroes / I should know because this fool's in love again."*

Joe Jackson seems to be drawing on the same traumas as his bespectacled counterpart (not to mention some of the same chord changes — try singing "Less Than Zero" against the verses of "Is She Really Going Out With Him?" or "Miracle Man" against the choruses of "Happy Loving Couples"), but ultimately he seems a far more sympathetic character and one whose emotional problems could be solved by the right girl rather than the destruction of the entire planet. He's a sharp (that word again) lyricist and a very, very fine singer — simultaneously crisp, matter-of-fact and highly expressive. If he can shuck his debts and maintain his standards, Joe Jackson is going somewhere.

Definitely.

Just one thing, though. That polkadot kipper tie is gonna *have* to go.

Charles Shaar Murray

RONNIE DAVIS
Sings For You And I
(Jamaica Sound)

Former vocalist with The Tennors ska and rock-steady outfit, with whom he co-authored the famous "Donkey" cycle of recordings, Ronnie Davis returns here with his third album since going solo in the early '70s.

Unlike his earlier two efforts — "Beautiful People From Jamaica" and "Hard Times" for producers E. McLeod and Striker Lee respectively — "Sings For You And I" represents a success of sorts for this powerful-voiced artist.

Containing a dozen sides, the majority of which surfaced over the past few years on his own JA On Top label, this set takes its place alongside a dozen or so superior albums in a period of notoriously indifferent excusions, reggaewise.

Produced jointly by Pat "Scabba" Sutherland and Davis himself, the outstanding titles on a set that maintains its consistency throughout its two sides are "Holding On", "No Weak Heart (Shall Enter Zion)" and the brilliant "Nations Against Nations" invective from 1977.

Also worthy of mention: "False Leader", "One Hero", "Just To Be Close", plus interpretations of Bob Marley's "Kaya" and Boney Melodians' "Rivers Of Babylon".

As Ronnie Davis has already remarked elsewhere, what you see is what you get! In reiteration of which, may I be the first to recommend...

Penny Reel

MOON MARTIN
Shots From A Cold Nightmare *(Capitol)*

Unless you remember the barely exploited excellence of the late Southwind then chances are that the moniker John 'Moon' Martin won't mean a flying duck. There again, the connection isn't vital — Martin's song-writing crush is recent; he's not a burning, undiscovered genius like myself, more of a johnny come lately who deserves a full-cocked ear.

What you do check are two songs, "Cadillac Walk", as covered by Willie de Mink's doo-wop combo, and "Victim Of Romance", an open-house solid commercial tear-jerker. Got the geezer? At least in spirit.

Martin is no stranger to the blinking studio lights, Southwind clocking three wooden discs (sales of over 250), but "Shots" is his true debut. Nothing new in the lyrical ideas suggests that we have a poet on our hands, but the point is that Martin gets to grips with corny teen, "Your love is killin' me, baby, got a bad case, call a doctor", guff and brings the corpse back to life without evoking The Beatles or The Pleasers or stupid power pop except by careful design.

Occasionally, the man hits on a combination of rock'n'roll expertise, courtesy of some vintage rockabilly licks, allied to a quatrain or doublet redolent of the form at its best. "Cadillac Walk" and "Paid Killer" are two such vignettes. They coin the two faces of Martin, the innocent naif sucking on his sheets transmogrified by female blood into a street-smart punk ("Hot Nite In Dallas", "She's A Pretender").

Moon sums up the opposition and gives up his knitted knot as a bad job.

Martin is abetted in the cause by a fine, hand-picked band, boasting Phil Seymour on skins, Gary Valentine on bass and producer Craig Leon on keyboards. The overall sound is high class, a trifle too wistful and flat, but indicative of a radio-tuned sensibility which ought to keep the boy safe from cult status and en route to the Blondie appeal market. All the songs have airwave frequencies, steer short of indulgence and ooze the combination of heartache and humourous deprecation necessary to maintain the listener's health and respect.

With typical generosity Capitol fail to provide English buyers with a lyric sheet. Don't be deterred, however, since it's safe to assume Moon Martin isn't just a hired hand, he's got it in him to run the ranch. Later this month he's over for some dates, further proof on request that he wants to sing and wants to play. Try "Shots From A Cold Nightmare" for sighs, you're unlikely to be disappointed.

Max Bell

UFO not slighted

UFO
Strangers In The Night
(Chrysalis)

How about this for a paradox? Here's a high-energy heavy metal band that displays fine taste and judgement.

UFO's riffs are exhilarating without ever being overbearing. Michael Schenker's guitar solos are flashily attacking but don't outstay their welcome. And Phil Mogg's vocals are suitably butch and raucous without resorting to caricature.

Most live double albums have their dead spots where the momentum simply isn't maintained. This was particularly true of Led Zep's aptly named "The Song Remains The Same", which was mainly one long dead spot. Even last year's Thin Lizzy double "Live And Dangerous" had its feebler moments, made all the more obvious by the strength of Lynott's best-known songs.

With this UFO set, though, it's hard to detect that kind of weakness. To put it simply: this album starts close to most bands' peak and just keeps climbing. In the main, UFO rely on short, sharp songs with simple hooks, and they fire them out one after the other. Songs like "Lights Out", "Too Hot To Handle", "Only You Can Reach Me" and "Doctor, Doctor". All very effective, and easy when you know how.

The one time the band attempt a bit of an epic — the lengthy "Rock Bottom" — they never once come close to floundering, building solidly all the way. The set even includes the occasional cunning change of pace: second track, side one is "Out In The Street" (no relation to P. Townshend), a deceptively lightweight ballad with a hard centre. It's as weak-kneed as they ever get.

Now, it's quite obvious that this album has little or no cultural/political significance. As far as the lyrics can be understood, they seem to offer no insight into the plight of suffering humanity. In fact, the only thing on offer here is high-grade hard rock entertainment — worth a million half-assed political diatribes and, to UFO, probably worth just a million.

No doubt they'll get disgustingly rich on the strength of "Strangers". But that's true of all successful rock performers — buy an album, support the wealthy. If you're into rock music you have to live with such social implications. That UFO have long hair and live in California makes them no less entitled to their moolah than your friendly neighbourhood spikey-heads.

Inevitably, "Strangers" is an album that will be deeply unfashionable. But if trendies are foolish enough to neglect it, that's their business.

Bob Edmands

Phil Mogg opts for the classical striped look. Pic: George Bodnar

Child: Blush when you're analysed, boys. Pic: Paul Canty

Child molested

CHILD
The First Album
(Ariola-Hansa)

It's very difficult to consider Child as a 'group' or on musical merit — to me they seem mostly like a bit of bland camp who appear to have caught most people on their blind side. Though I know it was the 'thing' awhile back to treat the Bay City Rollers in a serious way, this is a horribly snobbish way to go about things.

So let's put hoity-toity world-view aesthetics away and ask why does it sell? *Does* it sell? Yes, but much less than it used to; all you can say about this kind of act, is, well, the majority of very young girls like to have a bit of inoffensive pretty-boy to screech at, don't they?

Child want to be rich and famous, are happy making records. They know they won't last long and want to rake in a bit of muck before the little girls start growing little brains. Are they the Pavlovs of 1979's English pre-pubertal population? No, the sum of their facial parts is seriously flawed. Are they in on the joke? No, they wear Lee denim jackets. Do they know there is a joke? Probably, in these rock-paper days.

Here, they sing 12 songs, all about being (mostly sadly, rarely happily) in love; mostly slow, all very quiet. They play their instruments as adequately as any senior punk band but their singing is weak. Their songs, apart from the few 50's/60's standards they perform — "When You Walk In The Room", "It's Only Make Believe" — are all tuneless wonders (now you know how many holes it takes to fill a Child album). It's a very maternal record — you know, if you were playing it your mother would probably ask you to turn it up.

The sound they are trying for, the subject matter and their handling of it aims for an image and imagery much closer to David Cassidy's wistful beach-comber sigh-scope than the *cheerfully* brainless bounce of the Bay City Osmonds, but it falls flat on its spots.

What Child *have* got going for them is the Atack twins, pretty blondies who could probably clean up those eight-14-year-old girls who've shied away from Travolta's dark foreign danger-dance. And that dark piece on guitar, old Cheekbones McKenzie, he sets them off well.

But! Looks, looks, looks is what teeny-weeny-heart-throbs are all about, and Graham Bilbrough, boys, your lead singer, is simply not the stuff that gets the seats wet. If he is a close friend, or if you are soft-hearted, boys, can't you just sit him at the back and put the drumsticks in his hands? Hang on — isn't Timothy, the extreme beauty of the Atack twins, the current drummer boy? Why, nothing could be simpler or more sensible — stick Graham at the drums, and let Timothy do lead mime. (Timothy is no moron, neither; he wrote a song on this album. It's pathetic, like the rest; this couldn't be less important to Tim's career.)

Interesting things: the photography is by Brian Aris, who made his name snapping "Page 3" girls for the *Sun* and now evidently is trying to move up-market in the visual world; a lot of girls they aim songs at are warned, in veiled terms, not to become loose women; not one song, or facial expression, or item of clothing indicates that the four members of Child possess one modicum of intelligence between them.

Still . . . any band who beat up Jean Jacques Burnel must have *some* germ of inner genius.

Julie Burchill

TONY COE
Coe-Existence *(Lee Lambert)*

Despite rather than because of Humphrey Lyttelton's eulogistic sleeve notes — "Tony Coe is one of the most remarkable and brilliant musicians in the world" — I gave this a spin, as they say.

This is that angle of British jazz more for the connoisseur than the cub scout cat, whose conservative excellence may be appreciated rather than enjoyed by those of us primitives with an ear firmly in the present's more tense and congruent sounds: hinge and bracket, Humph and Braxton?

There's a fair shelf of standards ("Lover Man", "Don't Get Around Much Any More", etc) and an original comp. or two that pushes its emphasis toward the ECM balance of the scales — the soprano-clarinet singsong on "Rio Vermelho" for instance. But generally the feel is untroubled and unfashionably fragile.

I don't know that I should use 'unfashionably', but then I don't know that I could match the sleeve note's search for "a satisfactory definition of *le jazz hot*".

"Co-Existence" is all cocoa to me, I'm afraid.

Ian Penman

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ACCESS BARCLAYCARD VISA WELCOME

ALICE COOPER
From The Inside *(Warner Bros)*
THE DOOBIE BROTHERS
Minute By Minute *(Warner Bros)*

Some people are into music like others are into real estate. It's a job, regular money, and there's no need to get emotionally entangled. Listening to these albums, I'd guess that was the case for Alice Cooper and The Doobie Brothers.

Genius may be pain, but "From The Inside" proves that pain isn't necessarily genius. Or even honesty. Supposedly based on Cooper's own experiences while receiving treatment for alcoholism, the album provides barely a glimmer of the harrowing times he must have undergone.

The title track and "Serious' are honourable exceptions; the rest are tacky showbix fantasies on the sensationalist aspects of insanity — from the studied histrionics of "The Quiet Room" to the gory schmaltz of "Millie And Billie".

The music — hard rock bombast, plus the occasional stodgy ballad — is thoroughly undistinguished. In all, "From The Inside" is like a failed attempt at a bad joke. Too silly to be serious, too complacent to be funny, and lacking enough imagination to be in bad taste.

Poor Alice! Back in the dark ages, he could turn out a decent pop single, but music doesn't seem to be his forte anymore. He made his name beheading dolls and playing golf; now he'd be better off growing tomatoes.

He could use The Doobie Brothers' album for fertiliser. The Doobies used to be a 'boogie' band like Long John Silver was a ballet dancer. Now they've changed their style, and it's a whole new cliche.

A White Soul Shuffle no less (and certainly no more), dreary beyond words. I guess they're trying to move into the Bee Gees market, but they'll end up pushing a barrow if they persist with the dull aural torture of "Minute By Minute". Rent-a-hack lyrics and music so turgid you could stand a spoon up in it; the first Wheelchair Disco record.

Albums like these make me despair. But then, I've never wanted to be an estate agent.

Graham Loch

Alice Cooper and buddy — welcome to their real estate

MUDDY WATERS
Muddy "Mississippi" Waters Live *(Blue Sky)*

Old Man Mud's been pretty visible these last couple of years. Though he had to go the same-old-same-old patronage-of-white-superstars route to do it (a big hand for Johnny Winter; a little finger for Eric Clapton) but the penny's dropped — Muddy Waters is now institutionalised as the white rock fan's favourite bluesman. The black American record-buyer's favourite bluesman is more likely to be Bobby Bland or B.B. or Albert, but that's another matter.

The white label copy of this album from which I'm working doesn't specify personnel or time or place of recording, but from aural evidence and the presence of Johnny Winter, "Muddy 'Mississippi' Waters Live" would seem to have been drawn from his 1977 promo tour from the "Hard Again" period, which would line the band up as James Cotton (harp), Pinetop Perkins (piano), Willie 'Big Eyes' Smith (drums), Charles Calmese (bass), Bob Margolin and Johnny Winter (guitars). (If, on the other hand, it was recorded in '78 with the regular Waters band, I shall shed the last tattered remnants of my blues credibility and sighingly trudge into the sunset).

This album is by no means the most forceful or dynamic live work that Muddy has ever cut — that honour belongs to the "Muddy Waters At Newport 1960" album or to the Waters tracks on the "Live At Big Bill's Copacabana" set — but it's the warmest and most relaxed. The opening "Mannish Boy" sounds uncharacteristically hesitant when compared to the raging, storming *tour de force* version that opened "Hard Again", but it sets a relaxed, good-humoured mood that never lets up for the entire length of the album. What I mean is it grooves.

As producer, Winter has slightly overbalanced the album in favour of slow blues cuts, mainly because it's these numbers which highlight Muddy's rare showcase solos. He seldoms plays more than one or two guitar solos a night, but the numbers on which he features his delicately brutal variations-on-a-theme tend to vary, making it easy to give an audience far more of Muddy's unique slide than they'd be likely to get in one set. However, there's a relentlessly swinging "Baby Please Don't Go" which enables Winter himself to strut his stuff, playing a creatively classicist lead guitar that stays stylistically congruent with the straight-ahead '50s-style Chicago blues of the Waters band while simultaneously eschewing the cliche-pitfalls that enfold most white bluesmen.

In a sense, the album saves its best shot for the end: a teasing, swinging drop-down-mama version of "Deep Down In Florida" that effortlessly eclipses the "Hard Again" version and features truly delightful slide-guitar interplay between Winter and his mentor.

After Muddy's epic gigs in this country over the last few years, there'll be a lot of people on the lookout for a Muddy Waters live album. This one does the job just fine, and once you're that far into the man's work, there's no way you aren't going to be looking for more.

You know something? I reckon this guy could be big.

Charles Shaar Murray

Imports

Ooops! Seems like "Tasty", the **Good Rats** album I recently reviewed in this column, was not a newie, as I supposed, but rather a reissue of earlier material. Apologies all round then, especially to the Rats themselves, who have just chomped up with a legit new release in "Birth Comes To Us All" (Passport), a not unimpressive offering.

This time around, it's the songs and nothing but the songs that matter, the Rats as a band virtually taking a back-seat as lead-man Peppi Marchello adopts his singer-songwriter stance, his ever-faithful rodents just tagging along for the ride in the company of such other friendly cheese-sharers as Manfred Mann, Brian Cuomo, Pete Woods, Larry Fast, Mel Collins, John Tropea and Richard Tee. So it's the leather-larynxed Marchello who does all the pinch-hitting (or hit-pinching in the case of a ditty called "Juvenile Song", which sounds for all the world like son of "Penny Lane") and he's penned a batch of diverse and shrewdly assembled pipe-benders, ranging from "Schooldays", a Seger-like, Collins-assisted rocker, cut at The Who's studios, through to the closing title number, a soft, reflective, look-back-and-be-thankful shot, that comes swathed in a baby-blue string arrangement devised by Will Malone. Immaculately recorded and mixed down with the aid of the new 602B Aphex Exciter System, "Birth" is probably the Rats' best shot to date. Willard-recommended.

"Looked in the mirror, I'm almost 32. Another four years and I'm through." The guy getting paranoid about picking up his pension is none other than our old chum **Armand Schaubroeck Steals,** the guy who can produce more expletives per lyric than McLaughlin can plan notes per concert. "You won't get any Bible crap outta my fuckin' mouth," he confides at one point on "Ratfucker" (Mirror), the latest in his line of potential Whitehouse heart-attacks imported by those jovial gents at Bonaparte Records. If Loopy Lou represents the streets then A.S.S. (neat initials those!) cheer-lads for the sewers. Obsessed by a desire to ball puberal chicklets — "Pre-teen mama, when you shake your little ass and shake your little thing, you make me go ding-a-ling, you're jailbait, I'll do fuckin' time for you" (from "Pre-teen Mama") and "Statutory rape, when I was 16 she was 13, that's why I'm here" (from "Buried Alive") — Steals also has a yen for the concept job, doing his party-piece on "The Queen Hitter", enacting the part of a hit man who specialists in wiping up dissenting wives. "Sometimes they're hard to reach and I have to pay an extra thousand for getting some junkie to hit her — plus my nine thousand for hitting the fuckin' junkie, of course!" he reveals. Meanwhile, the band rips through a James Bond riff to the rear and Steals sidles off stage left, yodelling "Zip per de doo dah, beautiful feeling, blowing a broad away," all accomplished in lip-whetting anticipation of a forthcoming shiv-twisting spree.

All-in-all, solid, well-over-the-top stuff and a definite musical threat to Derek and Clive. By the way, all album purchasers receive a free, blood red, "Ratfucker" inscribed plectrum. I thought you'd like to know that.

Fred Dellar

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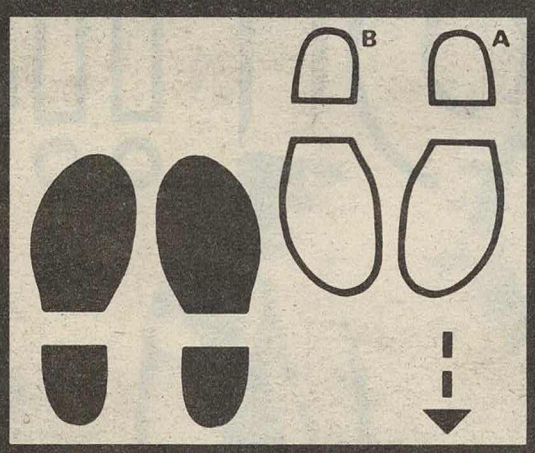

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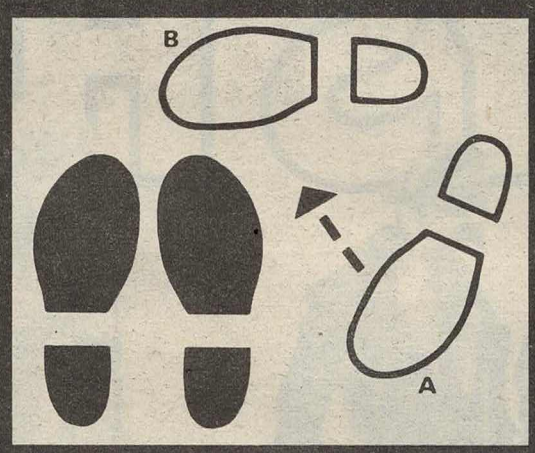

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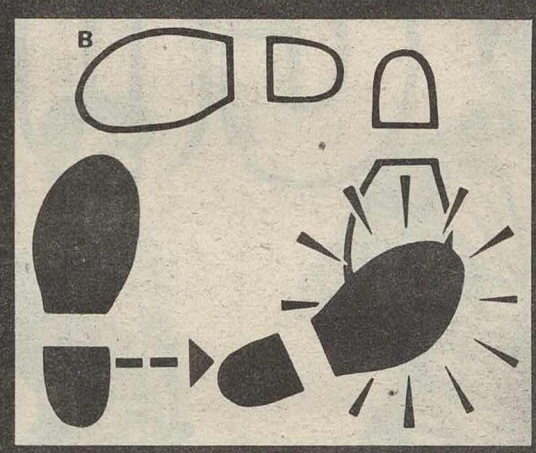

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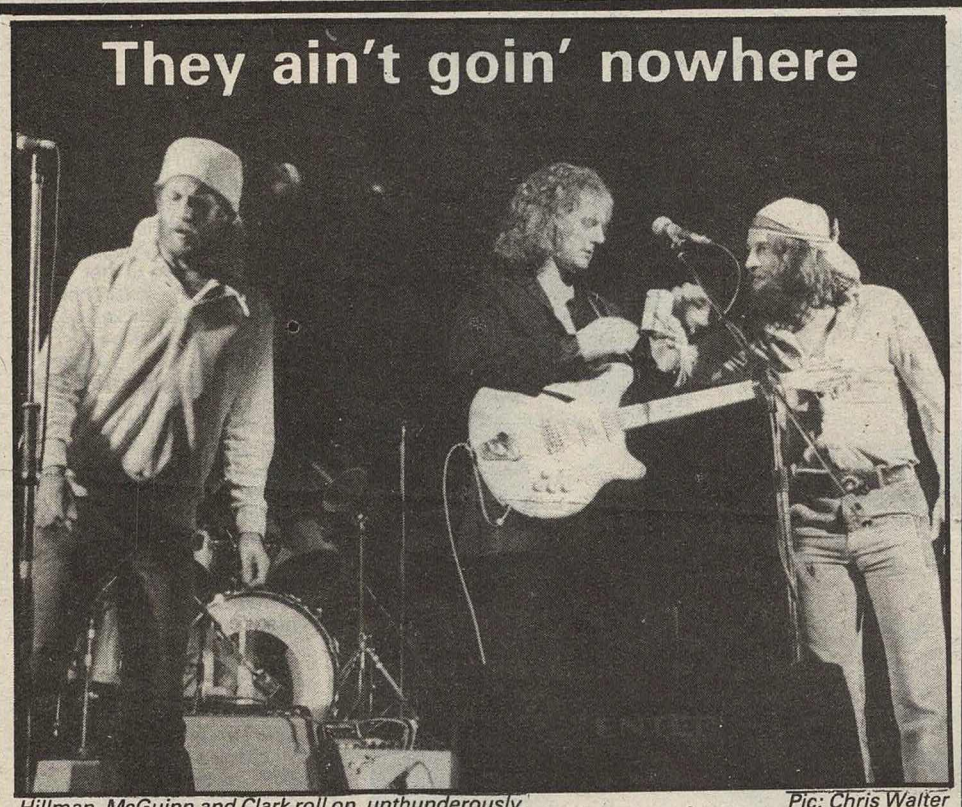


Hillman, McGuinn and Clark roll on, unthunderously. *Pic: Chris Walter*

McGUINN, CLARK & HILLMAN
McGuinn, Clark & Hillman (*Capitol*)

If watching someone you once admired attempting to be inspired is the most pathetic sight imaginable, as some bloke maintained in last week's ish, then this album is admirably suited for the squeamish.

Not that Messrs McGuinn, Clark and Hillman are even attempting to be inspired here. There's the distinct impression that these three have known for some time they're all over the hill, incapable of mustering up anything of any consequence. So they gather together in the usual 'safety-in-numbers' stratagem and, depressingly, milk whatever may be left of their reputation as three-fifths of the original Byrds and the current inclination of their L.A. peers to manufacture seedy aural placebos in lieu of actual music. The result would be merely sad were they not so repellent to a fan of the Byrds' finest years (approximately '65-'68, with "Chestnut Mare" for a chaser).

The album's cover is an aptly hideous showcase for the contents lurking within. Against the grainy photo of the three participants (bearing distinct signs of cosmetic restructuring) runs a sort of 'do-it-yourself' *Rolling Stone* review, with the usual vacuous superlatives dragged forth ("There is a timeless quality in 'McGuinn, Clark & Hillman' that renders anaylsis insignificant"), courtesy the famously unknown Stephen Peebles.

From the first notes of "Long Long Time" — a song so chock-full of all the cliches inherent in the indolent traditions of the already torpid 'mellow' genre (the usual hokum about 'change' and 'picking up the pieces') — "McGC&H" groans under the weight of its own tedium right through to the last cosy acoustic strum of "Bye Bye Baby", a characteristic McGuinn prostitution of the style he once landmarked so masterfully with "Chestnut Mare".

This is all stuff of a sickening sweetness, an unrelieved crassness well beyond the call of commerical duty. Instead of a steady stab at instant Byrds nostalgia with the 12-string Rickenbacker forced to the fore of a crystalline mix, McG, C&H have chosen to cloak their slop in a style approximating anonymous eclecticism. So we have to tolerate surrogate doo-wop (Clark's "Little Mama"), surrogate calypso (McGuinn's "Don't You Write Her Off", Clark's treacly "Feelin' Higher") and surrogate boogie (Hillman's baleful "Stopping Traffic" and "Sad Boy").

Forget that Gene Clark actually produced a decent solo affiar some four years back ("No Other") or that McGuinn's "Cardiff Rose" had its agreeable moments — only Hillman on his own has seemed bereft of talent — because this desperate enterprise is aimed at the lowest common denominator imaginable. Lower than the Eagles or, God forbid, even Firefall, this is the kind of pablum one can see appealing solely to senile health food nuts who get drunk at weekends on cheap Chablis and go out in the woods to talk to the bears.

If you are still thirsting for some semblance of that old Byrds spark, then plump for the Big Star double-pack, one of Television's two epic releases or Chris Stamey's current single "You Wanted To Know", and you'll find the tradition being kept up, even as its slothful instigators contribute their last combined whimper toward deserved oblivion.

Nick Kent

HORSLIPS
The Man Who Built America *(DJM)*
SNIFF 'N' THE TEARS
Fickle Heart *(Chiswick)*

There's a rumour abroad that Horslips are an Irish folk-rock group, but this album sounds like the work of clapped-out power-poppers. Jangly guitars, pretty harmonies, trite lyrics on love and loneliness—if it wasn't for the occasional and irrelevant intrusions of whistles, concertinas and other suitably ethnic instruments, this might be a Pleasers' album (perish the thought!).

"The Man Who Built America" is supposed to be a concept album, though I'd never have guessed and I still don't believe it. Drummer Eamon Carr reckons it's about "the idea that people can find a new place and build it from the ground up."

Well, great! I mean, up is probably a good direction to build in. But this startling insight has little to do with the actual lyrics which, if anything, are concerned with relationships breaking up 'cos the man has to be moving on in search of rainbows, destiny, dreams and similar heavy conceptual apparatus (intellectual rigour and lyrical originalty are not exactly Horslips' strong points).

Horslips drummer Eamon Carr passes comment on life

A more successful, albeit flawed, attempt at pop romanticism comes courtesy of Sniff 'n' The Tears. The light, melodic drive that graced their "Driver's Seat" single is in evidence throughout "Fickle Heart", but it proves an insufficient quality on which to base an entire album.

Prime movers of the group are Paul Roberts (singer, writer) and Luigi Salvoni (drummer, producer). Roberts has an engaging voice which suits the reflective, rueful tinge of his songs, and Salvoni achieves a clear, uncluttered sound. But these modest successes are undermined by the presence of several unremarkable tunes and a set of disappointing lyrics.

Apart fron the forced narrative of "The Thrill Of It All" and the muddled attempt at a statement on "Looking At You", the lyrics are studiously contrived romantic cliches. Occasionally, this technique fits — "The Last Dance" is perfectly realised candyfloss sadness —but mostly it just makes the songs less interesting.

The glossy superficiality of Roberts' cover painting is repeated in the music. A clever exercise in stylistic vignettes, "Fickle Heart" ends up as an album of small delights and little substance. Stay with the single.

Graham Lock

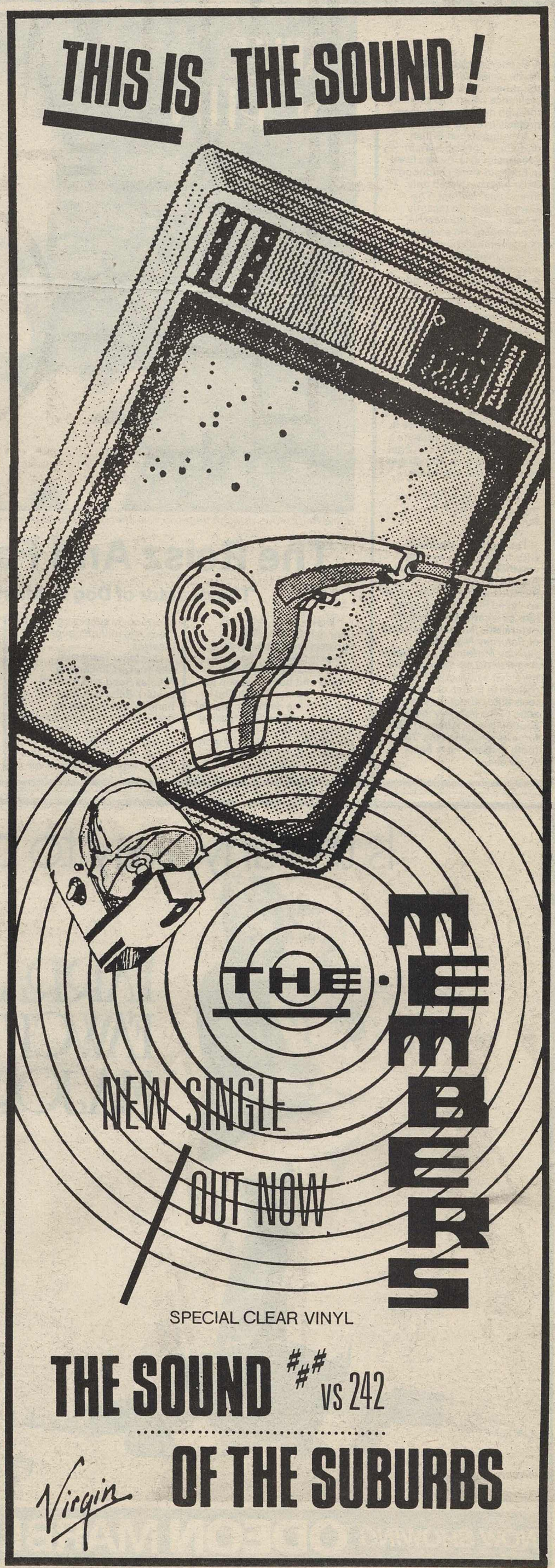
ROBERT JOHNSON
Close Personal Friend *(Ensign)*

As Mr. Johnson is calling virtually all the shots on this album, it would seem he has a great deal more confidence in his talents, varied and diverse as they are, than I.

Robert the vocalist, I think, falls somewhere below Robert the rhythm guitarist, but above Robert the songwriter. Unfortunately, Robert Johnson is one of those people who seem to have acquired an unsettling ability to write songs that always sound vaguely familiar. And, while this feeling of distant kinship is quietly comforting at first, the coziness soon degenerates into yawning disinterest.

At the mixing desk Bobby really flunks out, almost succeeding in cooling out his one shining light, his rhythm guitar work. Straight E's and a tall pointy hat. So all we're left with here is a very ordinary American light rock/pop album.

John Hamblett



SILVER SCREEN

Karel Reisz blows through thumb in vain attempt to extend ash on cigarette. *Pic by Tom Sheehan.*

The Reisz And Fall Of A Lazy Man

The director of Dog Soldiers talks a bit and smokes a lot.

A slender, almost ascetic frame belies Karel Reisz's toughness of spirit, a resilience which has seen him through numerous aborted projects over the past decade.

A distinguished British director — though born in Czechoslovakia, he has lived in England since childhood — Reisz has completed only three films (*Isadora, The Gambler* and the recently released *Dog Soldiers)* in twelve years. He's vaguely philosophical about this relative inactivity and — ensconced behind a huge desk in his Hampstead home — evidently unperturbed, though an earnest inquisitiveness often breaks his otherwise benign features and he chain smokes.

"I don't know why I haven't made many films," he says, in the precise tone of someone who attended an 'approved' school. (He graduated from Cambridge in physics and is a Spurs supporter, so figure it out yourself.) "I do prepare a lot of subjects that I don't get round to making. Sometimes I can't raise the money for certain projects."

He shrugs as he waits for the ash to fall from his Silk Cut.

"And I'm lazy."

Taking that remark with a sifterful of Saxa, I wonder whether Reisz — with Lindsay Anderson and Tony Richardson, co-founder of the so-called Free Cinema of the late '50s/early '60s when the naturalistic 'kitchen sink' style of *Saturday Night And Sunday Morning, Look Back In Anger* and *This Sporting Life* heralded a new era of social realism in British cinema — feels bitter about the wretched state of the industry in this country today. After all, the films he's made in the '70s (both of them) have been American.

"That's simply because they're both American subjects and I go where the subjects take me," he says. "There is also a perfectly simple and boring reason to account for the British film industry: the domestic market is very small and film-making is very expensive. If I was in my 20s now (he's 52), I'd work in television, no question. You'd have to make an enormously successful film to reach five million people in theatres."

Like other respected film-makers (including Nicolas Roeg and Richard Lester), Reisz has 'kept his hand in' before now by making commercials but, I tell him, three or four year gaps between features is a criminal waste of a proven directorial talent, especially when even most good directors are able to make an annual movie.

"The people who make films every year are J. Lee Thompson and Sam Peckinpah since he's been making shit," he says, gently rising to the bait. "I am specially slow, I admit that, but your argument doesn't bear analysis."

Francois Truffaut though, for example, makes at least one film a year.

"Well, he makes too many and they're probably no good. Not too many for himself perhaps, because he lives through his work and that's a matter of temperament. To find a subject that really grabs you, that you think you can do something serious with *and* that has some box-office possibilities, isn't all that easy."

One such subject is Robert Stone's novel *Dog Soldiers* ("A wonderful book") and the resultant film starring Nick Nolte (reviewed in *Silver Screen 13/1/79)* is the most ambitious and engrossing of the current spate of Viet Nam-related movies. The Nolte character, Hicks, is a peculiarly complex hero, resolutely defending a stash of smuggled heroin from the clutches of a corrupt police force and the Mafia. As a cold-eyed look at America's legacy for its involvement in S.E. Asia (dope addiction and corruption), *Dog Soldiers* is entirely admirable, and certainly preferable to the wet and woolly *Coming Home,* wherein Jane Fonda and Jon Voight publicly assuage liberal guilt ten years too late.

Even the music — Creedence Clearwater songs, as popular in Nam as in California, where most of *Dog Soldiers* is set — is intelligently chosen, as against the nudging 'protest' songs used in *Coming Home.* Unsurprisingly, a hard-headed thriller that perfectly conveys that sour era of corruption, confusion and false idealism has bombed out in America, ever reluctant to re-open old wounds.

"The morality of the film parallels the morality of that time," says an unrepentant Reisz. "A time when government authority was being used for totally criminal purposes — which, of course, the Viet Nam war was.

"In the 2nd World War, Hicks would be a successful, contented soldier. But he's in a world where there isn't a war to which he can subscribe — there is nothing honourable to fight for. He's like a beached whale.

"*Dog Soldiers* holds as entertainment, it's a damn

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good story, but where we're in trouble with a big audience is that the heroes are a bit to ambiguous."

A bit to much like real people?

"If you like. Hicks is an unsentimental view of macho. A more sentimental view of macho may be more popular, but fuck it."

There is, of course, a political edge to *Dog Soldiers'* melodrama but, despite his socialist leanings, Reisz has a horror of 'political' films, finding them naive and unbelievable. The Free Cinema group were considered political, he reckons, merely because they took social reality seriously.

"If you make films about politicised characters, you end up making films for your friends. And you wish statements on your characters that you just don't believe of them in actuality. A good premise for a film is a couple of characters with a dilemma. A bad premise for a film is a social problem. Because then your characters become spokesmen illustrating that problem. That's the wrong way round. You are making fiction after all, and direct political involvement is not a good foundation for fiction.

"There's never been a good polemical left-wing cinema — anywhere. The only one who's succeeded in finding a big audience with outright leftist views is Costa-Gavras, who turns them into thrillers. I've nothing against them, but they're not the high points of *my* cinematic experience.

"If it doesn't sound too pretentious, *Dog Soldiers* is a sort of requiem for the '60s."

He winces. "That does sound pretentious. I wish I hadn't said it."

As we leave, Reisz makes a request. "Now don't go making out *Dog Soldiers* to be highbrow, or no-one will go and see it. Just because I'm an intellectual —"

Doesn't necessarily mean you're a bad person?

He laughs.

"Some of my best friends are intellectual."

Monty Smith

"Watch out, Karel — that ash is gonna fall all over page 34." Fats gives Anthony Hopkins a hard time in Magic. Bob Woffinden goes for a gottle of geer.

Magic

Directed by Richard Attenborough
Starring Anthony Hopkins, Ann-Margret and Burgess Meredith
(20th Century Fox)

Possessing no more advance information about this movie than its title and the name of the director, I was halfway prepared to discover Richard Attenborough standing in brother David's shoes and making a documentary about witchdoctors in Borneo.

On the contrary, *Magic* has been conceived as a commercial blockbuster (as indeed were Attenborough's other '70s movies, *Young Winston* and *A Bridge Too Far)* — a pyschological horror film to catch the fading slipstream of *The Exorcist.*

In fact, it's probably everything that producer Joseph Levine wanted it to be. Though not particularly good, it's almost certainly good enough. Attenborough directs with cool intelligence and occasional flair, but rarely with absolute mastery, and he doesn't always seem fully happy working in the genre.

Perhaps he'd bitten off too much. William Goldman's original story clearly needed embellishment. Compare it to the last Goldman work to be filmed, *Marathon Man,* which benefited enormously from the expertise of John Schlesinger as director and Dustin Hoffman in the lead role, so much so that it became an exercise in terror of nightmarish proportions. Attenborough and Hopkins are an altogether less formidable partnership.

Corky (Hopkins) is a timid magician who has mastered most of the tricks, but who lacks the extroversion, charm and stagecraft necessary to attract an audience. So he turns to ventriloquism, and the coarse back-chat of Fats ("the only X-rated dummy on the block") helps eradicate his personality shortcomings. People flock to see Fats, and Corky's agent (Meredith) is delighted.

However, his solitary request to Corky as he prepares to meet the Big Time ("Don't turn shitty on me") echoes resoundingly, as Corky abandons ship suddenly and heads for the Catskill mountains to look up an old flame. At which point, the film shifts gear, loses the intriguing momentum of the early scenes, and begins to borrow its atmospherics from *Psycho,* a well-nigh exhausted seam of cinematic inspiration.

It all unravels neatly enough after that, but Attenborough is certainly no Hitchcock, and by the end the plot is seeming woefully thin. Furthermore, the entire central premise of the film seems naggingly familiar, although I confess that no particular antecedent comes readily to mind.

Attenborough made attention to historical detail a factor of consummate importance in both *Young Winston* and *A Bridge Too Far,* and he has been equally diligent in seeking verisimilitude here. Technical consultants are credited — magicians and ventriloquists; he even picked the brains of an expert on regional accents. I can't help thinking that they should have employed a consultant psychologist as well.

The film does boast excellent performances by Ann-Margret, whose looks, figure and acting ability all improve with the passing years, as the old flame, and by Burgess Meredith. Finally, however, it is seen to employ only frustrating *legerdemain* — pretending to have more tricks up its sleeve than it actually has.

Bob Woffinden

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TICKETS £2-50 (INC. VAT) ADVANCE LYCEUM BOX OFFICE, TEL. 836 3715, LONDON THEATRE BOOKINGS, TEL. 439 3371, PREMIER BOX OFFICE, TEL. 240 2245, EDWARDS & EDWARDS, TEL. 734 9761, OTHER AGENTS, OR £2-50 ON NIGHT

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CITY HALL ST. ALBANS

Friday Feb. 2nd & Saturday Feb. 3rd, 8 pm.
Last Dates on '79 tour
THE KINKS
+ STADIUM DOGS
Advance tickets £2.50
(Saturday tickets sold out)

Saturday Feb. 10th at 8 pm
ROD ARGENT
with
PHIL COLLINS, GARY MOORE, ALPHONSO JOHNSON, ROB LUMLEY
Advance tickets £2.00

All tickets available from Box Office, 37 Chequer St., St Albans, tel. 64511 or on door. Cheques & P.O.s made payable to St Albans District Council

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DINGWALLS

01-267 4967 Camden Lock, Chalk Farm Road, London NW1

THURS 1 FEB
JOE JACKSON
FRI 2
SORE THROAT
plus support
SAT 3 20th anniversary of
BUDDY HOLLY, RICHIE VALENS
& THE BIG BOPPER's AIRPLANE CRASH
FUMBLE
THURS 8
THE CAROL GRIMES BAND

THE NASHVILLE ROOM

FULLERS TRADITIONAL ALES

Thur 1st Feb £1
THE MEMBERS & Local Operator

Fri 2nd Feb 75p
THE SOFT BOYS & E.F. Band

Sat 3rd Feb £1
SUPERCHARGE & Trimmer & Jenkins

Sun 4th Feb £1
GONZALEZ & Showbiz Kids

Mon 5th Feb 75p
THE YOUNG BUCKS & Pinpoint

Tue 6th Feb 75p
STRAIGHT 8 & Phil Ram Band

Thur 8th Feb 75p
THE VALVES & Interview

CORNER CROMWELL ROAD/NORTH END ROAD, W14
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Armadillo Records in conjuction with Rough Trade present

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

ROBERT RENTAL NORMAL ESSENTIAL LOGIC
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Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments presents

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RAINBOW THEATRE LONDON Sat 17th-Sun 18th February	01-263 3148
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GLASGOW APOLLO Thursday 22nd February	041 332 9221/2
ABERDEEN CAPITOL Wednesday 28th February	0224 23141
EDINBURGH ODEON Thursday 1st March	031 667 3805
LANCASTER UNIVERSITY Friday 2nd March	0524 65201
LEEDS UNIVERSITY Saturday 3rd March	0532 39071
BRISTOL HIPPODROME Monday 5th March	0272 299444
BRIGHTON DOME Tuesday 6th March	0273 682127
RAINBOW THEATRE LONDON Thurs. 8th-Fri 9th March	01-263 3148

Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments presents

FRANK ZAPPA

BIRMINGHAM ODEON Sat 10th-Sun 11th February	021 643 6101
MANCHESTER APOLLO Monday 12th February	061 273 1112/3
NEWCASTLE CITY HALL Tuesday 13th February	0632 20007
GLASGOW APOLLO Wednesday 14th February	041 332 9221/2
BRIGHTON CENTRE Friday 16th February	0273 202881
HAMMERSMITH ODEON Sat. 17th-Mon. 19th February	01-748 4081

The best tickets for all the above London concerts are obtainable from the Harvey Goldsmith Box Offices at Chappells, 50 New Bond Street, London W1 01-629 3453 and at the Great Gear Market, 85 Kings Road, London SW3 01-352 9363 (25p booking fee per ticket)

DOG WATCH

Friday Feb 2nd
OXFORD
Corn Dolly
Saturday Feb 3rd
BISHOPS STORTFORD
Triad Leisure Centre
Sunday Feb 4th
EAST HAM
Ruskin Arms
Wednesday Feb 7th
ILFORD
Oscar's Greengate
Thursday Feb 8th
STOKE NEWINGTON
Pegasus
Saturday Feb 10th
BASILDON
Double Six

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ADVERTISERS NOTE

Booking procedures are back to normal.

Thank you for your understanding.

VIPs

Every Saturday. . .
Wheatsheaf, Kings Road (Worlds End)
Friday February 2nd
Warwick University, Coventry
Sunday February 4th
Marquee
(Thanks to Little Bo Bitch)
Bookings 01-673 5631.

CUDDLY TOYS

at the
MUSIC MACHINE
Thursday, 1st February
(with Chelsea and UK Subs)

THE *Venue*

160 VICTORIA ST, SW1
(opp Victoria Tube station)
01-834 5500

Weds January 31st
IAN MATHEWS
Doors open 7 and 11.30, showtime 8.30 & 12, £3

Thurs February 1st
WALTER EGAN
Doors open 8, show time 9, £3

Fri Feb 2nd & Sat Feb 3rd
ANGELO BRANUARDI
Doors open 8, show time 9, £3

Sunday February 4th
KOKOMO
Doors open 7, show time 8, £3

Weds February 7th
MOON MARTIN
Doors open 8, show time 9, £3

Thursday 8th & Friday Feb 9th
ROD ARGENT & FRIENDS
Doors open 8, show time 9, £3

Sat February 10th
OSIBISA
Doors open 7 & 11.30, show time 8.30 & 12, £3

Sun February 11th
EDDIE MONEY
Doors open 7, show time 8, £3.00

Thurs 15, Fri 16, Sat Feb 17th
McGUINN HILLMAN & CLARK
Doors open 7 & 11.30, show time 8.30 & 12, £4

Friday February 23rd
Final London performance of
MIKE WESTBROOK'S MAMA CHICAGO
Doors open 7 show time 8 £3

Saturday 24th Feb
RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON
Doors open 7 & 11.30, show time 8.30 & 12, £3

THE BRIDGE HOUSE

23 BARKING ROAD, CANNING TOWN, E16

Thursday February 1st 30p
JAPANESE TOY

Friday February 2nd 40p
WARM JETS
+ Thieves Like Us

Saturday February 3rd 50p
RAMROD

Sunday February 4th 40p
REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD

Monday February 5th 30p
WILGAR CAMPBELL BAND

Tuesday February 6th
LEE FARDON BAND

Wednesday February 7th
SUCKER
+ Support

Thursday February 8th 30p
SISTER LOUISE

PEGASUS

109 GREEN LANES, LONDON N.16.
01-226 5930

Thursday Feb 1st. BARRY RICHARDSON Free
Friday Feb 2nd. SECRET SEVEN + CROOKS 50p
Saturday Feb 3rd. BIG CHIEF 50p
Sunday Feb 4th. LEYTON BUZZARDS 80p
Monday Feb 5th STRANGEWAYS + PSYCHEDILIC FURS Free
Tuesday Feb 6th. TENNIS SHOES 50p
Wednesday Feb 7th. SPLIT SCREENS + GENERAL ACCIDENT 50p
Thursday Feb 8th. DOG WATCH

DUKE OF LANCASTER

Approach Road, New Barnet
(beside BR New Barnet)

Thursday Feb. 1st
KESTREL
Friday Feb. 2nd
SUCKER
Saturday Feb. 3rd
SOHO
Sunday Feb. 4th
JERRY THE FERRET
Tuesday Feb. 6th
SHOTS

HOPE & ANCHOR

UPPER STREET ISLINGTON, N.1

CELLAR BAR CLOSED FOR INSTALLATION OR REAL ALE

Watch this space for re-opening date

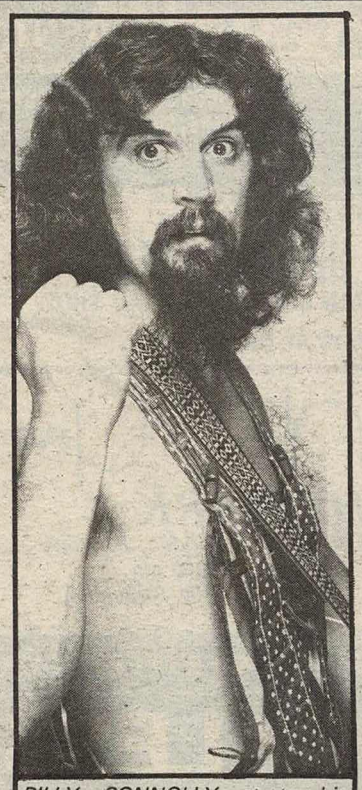
SUCKER

FEBRUARY DATES

Fri 2nd: Duke of Lancaster, New Barnet
Wed 7th: Bridge House, Canning Town
Fri 9th: Brecknock, Camden
Sat 10th: Westfield College, Hampstead
Sun 11th: Marquee, Wardour St.
Thurs 15th: Duke of Lancaster, New Barnet
Sun 18th: Marquee, Wardour St.
Fri 23rd: Brecknock, Camden

Enquiries: ALAN STUART MANAGEMENT 01-735 1932

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE



BILLY CONNOLLY starts his aptly-named Big Wee Tour this week, which takes in a massive 63 dates before finishing in April. The Big Yin starts his travels in his native Scotland, visiting Wick (Thursday), Dingwall (Friday), Forfar (Saturday), Arbroath (Sunday), Lanark (Tuesday) and Kilbirnie (Wednesday).

Thursday

Birmingham Barbarella's: **Osibisa**
Birmingham The Bell: **The Clerks**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Infants**
Brighton Dome: **The Kinks / Stadium Dogs**
Brighton Sussex University: **Cheap Trick**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Eastleigh Crown Hotel: **Thieves Like Us**
Gloucester Leisure Centre: **Showaddywaddy**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **Laura Logic & The Extensions / Double Xposure**
Leeds Fan Club: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
Leeds Polytechnic: **Wreckless Eric / The Softies**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Joe Jackson**
London Camden Music Machine: **Chelsea / U.K. Subs / Raped**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Split Rivitt**
London Deptford Albany Empire: **The Red Lights / The Realists**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Dead Ringer**
London Hammersmith The Rutland: **Fred Rickshaw's Hot Goolies**
Lond Hammersmith The Swan: **Beast**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Members / Local Operator**
London Marquee Club: **Straight 8**
London Old Kent Road Thomas A'Beckett: **Tour De Force**
London Oxford St. 100 Club: **Pressure Shocks**
London Royal Albert Hall: **Andrae Crouch & The Disciples**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Bill Skeat Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Barry Richardson Band**
London Tottenham The Spurs: **Zilch**
London Victoria The Venue: **Walter Egan**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **Shocking Stockings**
Manchester Band on the Wall: **Landscape**
Manchester (Eccles) Talk Of The North: **Civvy Street (for three days)**
Manchester Pips: **Alien Tint / The Stopouts**
Manchester Withington Police Club: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Norwich Boogie House: **Girlschool**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Hormones**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Lap Region**
Oxford Cape of Good Hope: **English Subtitles**
Oxford Polytechnic: **N.W.10**
Poole Arts Centre: **Crown Heights Affair**
Portsmouth Polytechnic: **Punishment Of Luxury**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Hot Water**
Skegness Arcadia Theatre: **Heathcliffe**
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: **Nazareth**
Southampton Joiners Arms: **Nightider**
Stockport Edgley Park County Club: **Gerry & The Pacemakers (for three days)**
Wick Assembly Rooms: **Billy Connolly**
Wolverhampton Civic Hall: **UFO**
York Revolution Club: **Doll By Doll**

Friday

Barwell Constitutional Club: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **Bad Earth**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Spitfire**
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: **Osibisa**
Bradford St. George's Hall: **Showaddywaddy**
Brighton Polytechnic: **After The Fire**
Bristol Colston Hall: **Andrae Crouch & The Disciples**
Bristol University: **Cheap Trick**
Bromley The Northover: **Matchbox**
Burton 76 Club: **Straight 8**
Cardiff University: **Gonzalez**
Chester Arts Centre: **Next**
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: **Wreckless Eric / The Softies**
Didcot Rutherford Laboratory: **Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators**
Dingwall Town Hall: **Billy Connolly**
Dundee College of Technology: **Sneakers**
Eastbourne Lottbridge Arms: **Nightrider**
Edinburgh Heriot Watt University: **The Cruisers**
Fareham Technical College: **Staa Marx / The Molesters**
Hanley Victoria Hall: **UFO**
Harlow Playhouse Theatre: **Jeremy Taylor**
High Wycombe Bucks College of Education: **U.K. Subs**
High Wycombe Town Hall: **Adam & The Ants**
Kettering Windmill Club: **The Bearshank Band**
Kirklevington Country Club: **Writz**
Knaresborough Folk Club: **Dave Goulder**
Lancaster University: **Gaffa**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Hot Water**
Leeds Playhouse Theatre: **Landscape**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Sore Throat / Frankenstein**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Warm Jets / Thieves Like Us**
London Hackney Chats Palace: **The Some Other Time Band**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Horslips**
London Manor Park Three Rabbits: **Raised On Robbery**
London Notting Hill Old Swan: **Anniversary**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Digby Fairweather Quartet**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Crown Heights Affair**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Secret Seven / The Crooks**
London Twickenham Richmond-upon-Thames College: **Sniff & The Tears**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Immigrant**
London Victoria The Venue: **Angelo Branduardi**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Lew Lewis Reformer / The Cannibals**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **Passions / The Raincoats / The Distributors**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Roy Ayers Band**
Matlock Pavilion: **Samson**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Desmond Dekker**
Newcastle Guildhall: **The Wall**
Newport Village Club: **Racing Cars**
Norwich White's: **Hazard**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Last Call**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Dog Watch**
Oxford Polytechnic: **Boys Of The Lough**
Reading University: **90° Inclusive**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Split Rivitt**
Sheffield Polytechnic: **Pressure Shocks / Double Life**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **Punishment Of Luxury**
St. Albans City Hall: **The Kinks / Stadium Dogs**
Sunderland Top Rank: **Gillan**
Winslow Public Hall: **N.W.10**
Wolverhampton Rollerdrome: **The Damned / Radio Stars**
York Revolution Club: **Trans-Am**
York Winning Post: **Red Eye**

CHUCK MANGIONE — one of today's most outstanding musical talents, who spent a full year in the U.S. charts with his album "Feels So Good" — makes his British concert debut at the London Palladium this Sunday, in company with his regular all-star backing band.

● *Other American visitors making their U.K. debuts are MOON MARTIN, who opens at Sheffield (Tuesday) and London The Venue (Wednesday); and EDDIE MONEY kicking off in Newcastle (Wednesday).*

Saturday

Aberdeen University: **Sneakers**
Aylesbury Friars: **Stiff Little Fingers**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Racing Cars**
Birmingham (Kings Heath) Hare & Hounds: **Shep Woolley**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Special Clinic**
Birmingham Odeon: **Andrae Crouch & The Disciples**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Dog Watch**
Bognor Sussex Hotel: **Short Stories**
Bradford University: **Gillan**
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: **The Wild Beasts**
Bristol Polytechnic: **After The Fire**
Carshalton St. Helier Club: **Matchbox**
Clayton-le-Moors Martholme Grange: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: **Crown Heights Affair**
Dundee University: **The Cruisers**
Dunstable California Ballroom: **Roy Ayers Band**
Farnborough Technical College: **Radio Stars**
Forfar Reid Hall: **Billy Connolly**
Glasgow Strathclyde University: **Alan Price**
Guildford Surrey University: **Wreckless Eric/The Softies**
Ipswich Tracey's: **Raaw**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **John Hedley Haggett Band**
Leeds University: **UFO**
Leicester Aylestone Club: **Strange Days**
Liverpool Eric's: **The Human League**
London Brixton St. Matthews Community Centre: **Belt & Braces Band**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Commemoration Night (20th Anniversary of deaths of Buddy Holly, Richie Valens and The Big Bopper)**
London Camden Music Machine: **Bette Bright & the Illuminations**
London Enfield Hop Poles: **Zilch**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Ricky Cool & The Icebergs**
London Hammersmith The Swan: **Double Xposure**
London Penge Groves Centre: **Tennis Shoes**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Bill Greenow/Fred Hunt Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Immigrant**
London Victoria The Venue: **Angelo Branduardi**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Split Rivvit/The Dyaks**
London W.C.1 Kingsway Princeton College of Further Education: **Gentry/The Dark**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Horslips**
Manchester Russell Club: **The Damned**
Manchester University: **Cheap Trick**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Desmond Dekker**
Newbury Coldash Hall: **Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators**
Newcastle University: **Wild Horses**
Nottingham Boat Club: **Dirty Tricks**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Outward Band**
Perth Moncrieffe Hotel: **The Trendies**
Reading Bulmershe College: **Simon Townshend Band**
Sheffield Hurlfield Campus: **Landscape**
Slough College: **Zaine Griff**
Southampton University: **"Be Limp" Package Tour**
St. Albans City Hall: **The Kinks/Stadium Dogs**
Stroud Marshall Rooms: **N.W.10**
Tamworth Chequers: **The Kidda Band**
Walsall Pelsall Community Centre: **Therapy/Misty**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**
Wolverhampton Civic Hall: **Nazareth**
York Revolution Club: **Hot Water**

Sunday

Accrington Lakeland Lounge: **Samson**
Arbroath Webster Theatre: **Billy Connolly**
Bedford Kempton Rovers F.C.: **Gerry & The Pacemakers**
Birmingham Arts Lab: **Landscape**
Birmingham Hippodrome: **Horslips**
Birmingham Odeon: **Nazareth**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Forwards**
Bishops Stortford Old Maltings: **Tracks (lunchtime) / Swing Street (evening)**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Piranhas**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Chelmsford Chancellor Hall: **Adam & The Ants**
Christchurch Jumpers Tavern: **Tours**
Colchester Gynes Court: **Boy Bastin**
Coventry Theatre: **UFO**
Dumfries Stagecoach: **Wild Horses**
Fallin Stuart Hall Tavern: **The Deft Jerks**
Harlepool Co-Operation Club: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Hull Arts Centre: **Red Eye**
Jacksdale Grey Topper: **Racing Cars**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **After The Fire**
Leicester Aylestone Club: **Strange Days**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Charing-X Rd. Astoria Theatre: **Jack Good's "Oh Boy" with Alvin Stardust/Joe Brown/Les Gray/Shakin' Stevens/Freddie 'Fingers' Lee etc.**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Zilch**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **Dog Watch**
London Film Co-Op: **This Heat**
London Finchley Torrington: **The Young Bucks**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Little Acre**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Beast**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Roy Ayers Band**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Gonzalez**
London Marquee Club: **Little Bo Bitch-/The V.I.P.'s**
London Palladium: **Chuck Mangione**
London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime): **Blue Moon**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Eddie Thompson**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Tribesman**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **The Leyton Buzzards**
London The Mall Institute of Contemporary Arts: **Gavin Bryars/John White**
London Victoria The Venue: **Kokomo/ Sniff & The Tears**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators**
Loughborough University: **Boys Of The Lough**
Macclesfield Bears Head: **Anniversary**
Middlesbrough Little Theatre: **National Youth Jazz Orchestra**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Nottingham Heart Good Fellows: **The Press**
Nottingham Playhouse Theatre: **Osibisa**
Redcar Coatham Bowl: **Gillan**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Aberystwyth University: **Osibisa**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Fashion**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Orphan**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Video**
Edinburgh Tiffany's: **Wild Horses**
Edinburgh Tiffany's: **White Horses**
Exeter Routes: **Cheap Trick**
Exeter Univeristy: **Horslips**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: **The New Jets**
Leicester Bailey's: **Gerry & The Pacemakers (for a week)**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **UFO**
Leicester Phoenix Theatre: **Landscape**
Liverpool The Crown: **Zilch**
London Camden Brecknock: **Tennis Shoes**
London Camden Dingwalls: **X Films/The Clerks/The Juvies**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Addix**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Nazareth**
London Marquee Club: **Wreckless Eric/The Softies**
London Old Brompton Rd. Troubadour: **Leah Kendrick**
London Paddington Western Counties: **Zilch**
London Putney Half Moon: **Dick Gaughan**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Psychadelic Furs/Strangeways**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Members**
Newcastle The Cooperage: **The Sabrejets**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Clifton Entertainment Centre: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Southend Talk Of The South: **Crown Heights Affair**

Tuesday

Birmingham Barbarella's: **Doll By Doll**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Cartoons**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **The E.F. Band**
Canterbury Odeon: **Cheap Trick**
Chatham Van Damme Club: **Samson**
Fleet Fox and Hounds: **Spredthick**
Lanark Memorial Hall: **Billy Connolly**
Leicester University: **Gruppo Sportivo/Sneakers**
London Camden Music Machine: **Radio Stars**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Lifeline**
London Marquee Club: **Straight 8**
London Purcell Room: **Landscape**

CHRIS DE BURGH — who, until recently, was probably the most in-demand support act in the business — has now graduated to the ranks of the headline acts. And after the success of his first bill-topping outing in the autumn, he's all set to take the plunge again, opening an extensive tour at Cambridge on Wednesday. That very talented lady Catherine Howe is special guest artist on all dates, which extend into March.

GRUPPO SPORTIVO, the Dutch band with the Italian name, have already proved more than capable of holding their own on the U.K. circuit. And they're back again for another tour, beginning at Leicester (Tuesday) and Preston (Wednesday), supported by The Sneakers. Our pic is of Gruppo's Jose Van Iersel.

London Sheen The Derby Arms: **Freddy's Feetwarmers**
London Shepherd Bush The Trafalgar: **Gino and The Sharks/Private Vices**
London Soho Pizza Express: **John McLevy/Jack Emblow Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Tennis Shoes**
London West Hampstead Railway Hotel: **Reema Reema/The Planets**
London Woolwich Odeon: **Dizzy Gillespie Quartet**
London W.1 Shaftesbury Ave. Queen's Theatre: **"Tommy" (for a season)**
London W.14 The Kensington: **64 Spoons**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **N.W.10**
Plymouth Metro: **Wreckless Eric/The Softies**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Moon Martin**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Wednesday

Ashford Ben Truman: **Samson**
Basildon Sweeney's: **Landscape**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Jameson Raid**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Cambridge Lady Mitchell Hall: **Chris De Burgh/Catherine Howe**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Coleraine Ulster University: **The Bishops**
Dawlish Grand Hotel: **Zaine Griff**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **UFO**
Gt. Yarmouth Wheels: **Boy Bastin**
Hatfield Polytechnic: **Rod Argent**
Keele University: **Cheap Trick**
Kilbirnie Walker Memorial Hall: **Billy Connolly**
Liverpool The Sportsman: **The Stopouts**
Liverpool University: **Horslips**
London Battersea Arts Centre: **Fran Landesman**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Immigrant**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **Out To Lunch**
London Camden Music Machine: **Stadium Dogs / The Physicals**
London Chadwell Heath Greyhound: **Dog Watch**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Davey Pattison Band**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **64 Spoons**
London Peckham Montpelier: **Blue Moon**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Dana Simmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues Showcase**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Martin Taylor Trio**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Split Screens / General Accident**
London Victoria The Venue: **Moon Martin**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **C Gas 5 / Ack Ack**
London Wimbledon F.C. Nelson's Club: **The Inmates**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **Stiff Little Fingers/Essential Logic**
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I'LL TELL YOU WHY I'M PISSED OFF
CENSORED BY CRIDER
OF MY NOSE!!!!!!
I'LL TELL YOU WHY BRIANS SLIGHTLY FED UP. IT'S BECAUSE I. (HIS CREATOR FRANK LAMB,) AM LEAVING THE FOLD OF THE N.M.E. SPACE ACE WILL NEVER BE SEEN AGAIN....
THANK THE STARS! BORING CRAP!
CHEERS! HURRAY!.. YAY!.. LESS, LESS!
BUT!..
.. I, (MIKE PROCTOR) AM TAKING OVER AND THIS MY FIRST STRIP.
BRIAN B SPACE
BASED ON A IDEA BY BRIAN B. FROM A HAPPENING BY - BRIAN B. BRIAN B DIDN'T do the ARTWORK. (BUT IT WAS MY IDEA BB)
HO HO! THATS IT I'M GONNA ENROL IN A CONVENT.
THE END

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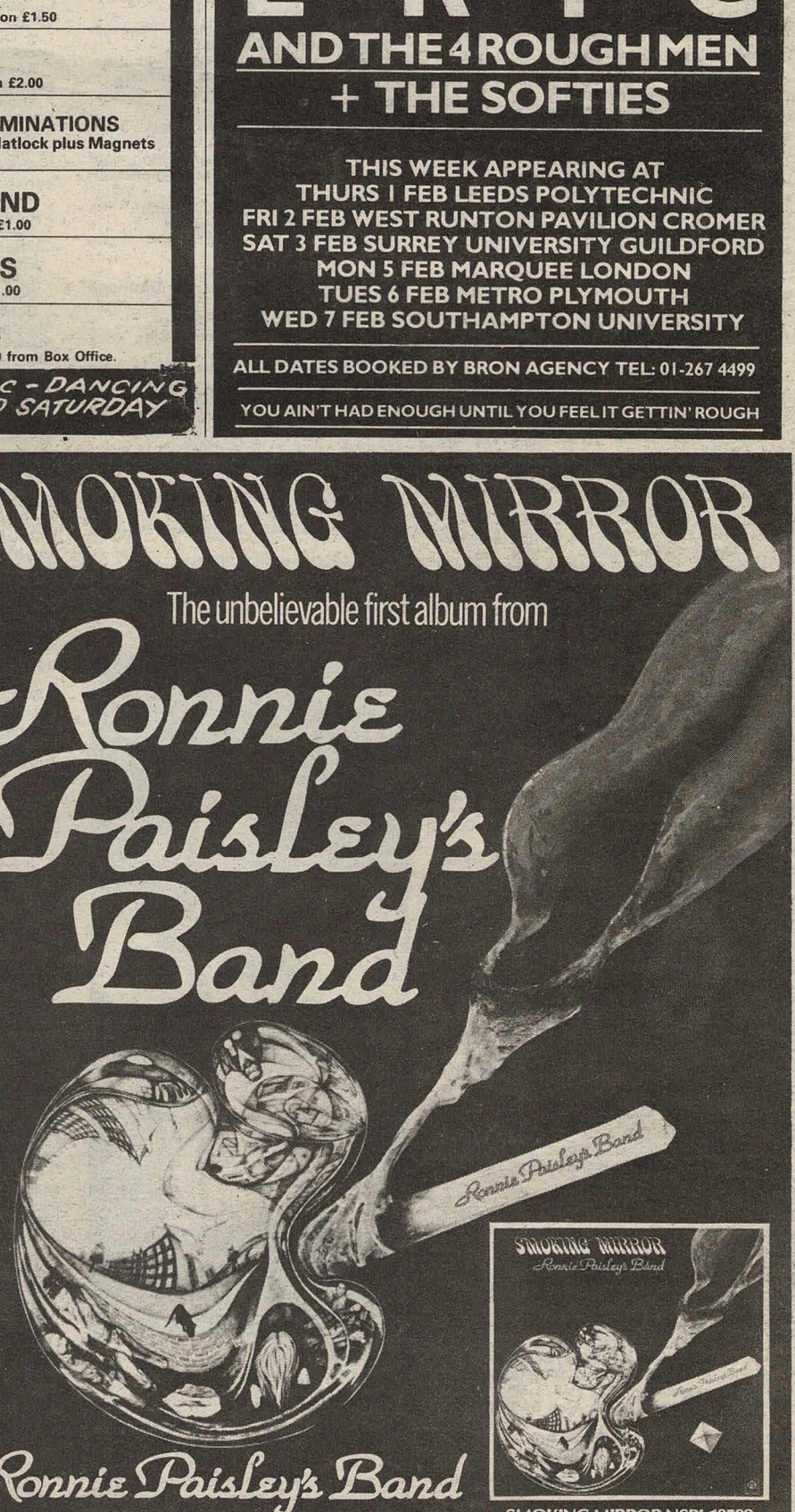

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PYE RECORDS

ON THE TOWN

If this doesn't make him think twice, nothing will

Sham 69

Middlesex Poly

It always ends in tears.

Sirens approach and the meat-waggons roll; there's blood on the floor in front of me and once again Sham 69 have fallen foul of their own unhappy legend. With the set abandoned, violence and confusion reign. The cynics must feel pleased.

Once, like a breath of fresh air, Jimmy Pursey got up a lot of noses in the music business. At a time when 'street' was the word *ad nauseam*, only Pursey was stubborn enough to walk it like he talked it (and oh how he talked it). He nearly crucified himself to keep the barriers down — to escape those things which define and confine 'The Star' and isolate him from those on whose allegiance he depends, whether emotionally or financially.

Their records were okay, the gigs were better; but the essence of Sham was that tension of a man who tried to reconcile his tenacious will to stand *with* and *for* the kids he believed in.

Brave enough to rage against their boot-brained bigotry, Pursey thrived on antagonism, forged ahead through conflict, found himself the victim of a vicious adulation.

Never was there a career so controlled from below. With a faith you either see as admirable or stupid, Jimmy Pursey gave 'em all enough rope. But the Sham Army turned into a lynch-mob.

Tonight's gig was a farce, cold with overtones of hate, collapsing into a tragic, bloody mess.

Uneasily policed by student rugger-types and edgy young security men with threadbare uniforms and big, glossy dogs, the college precincts were unhealthy from the start.

Skinhead groups commanded corridor-corners, formed in tribes by football team or right-wing faction. The bar was closed, smashed up. I saw a few young girls subjected to some unpleasantness. No vision of 'Wild Youth', just of swaggering slobs.

The BBC were filming and many acted up accordingly — egged on to excess by paunchy media-men easily old enough to know better.

Sham's build-up began with "Clockwork Orange", massively amplified (asking for trouble, surely), and — stupidly — "Land Of Hope And Glory", guaranteed to arouse the "patriotic" contingents. Rock'n'roll Nuremburg.

Sham erupt — the stage is stormed and savagely cleared. 'Bodyguards' and trouble-makers are hard to tell apart. Songs are interrupted, the microphone usurped. Pursey fights to control a thrashing mass of bodies. They stomp the ground and punch the air . . . then turn against each other.

Badly shaken, Pursey holds up a broken bottle and the band disappear.

Appeals for peace follow the Sham return: "I WILL ALWAYS BE HERE!" Anguished speeches, defiant manifestos; the cameras keep on rolling.

Let it be said that what little music Sham did manage was magnificent: daft and glorious and overpowering perfection.

But by now the Goon Squad have swamped the stage entirely.

Afraid for their equipment, the BBC retreat, and there it ended. Sham were gone and the police were coming in. I'd seen enough.

My heart bleeds for Jimmy Pursey and Sham 69, though others bleed elsewhere. Much of what he says or does is dumb, misguided; but his honesty and conviction just can't be questioned. No way does he deserve *this*.

Paul Du Noyer

The Inmates

Birkbeck College

God only knows why nobody told you the news that the best rocking tonight, or any other night, is being provided by The Inmates.

They played Birkbeck for free, winding down a generous assault on London which hasn't yet got this remarkable band their deserved exposure or kudos.

Initially, they're an R'n'B experience. Perhaps that style isn't guaranteed to fire the imagination with any new visions of immortality, but the ratio of basic content to sheer excitement soon snowballs critical terminology.

If The Inmates are as good as any of the five-year plan groups who succumbed to new wave with a whimper, then the difference is that they know what they like and they show every sign of furthering the genre.

Material and inspiration are drawn from a wide cross section of the classiest practitioners — Sam And Dave, Wilson Pickett, Otis Redding; all primed and ready to do battle with Islington Stax-Volt takeaway. Then again the band can channel basic energy through vintage garage punk — Standells, Seeds, Leaves.

They establish a pedigree which has me openly amazed. And this is no anachronism either, no history lesson; the potential audience could be anyone — of any age.

Three ex-cannibals — guitarists Peter Gunn and Tony Oliver, plus bassist Ben Donelly — are The Inmates' backbone of spontaneous flavour. Behind them drummer John Bull demonstrates the rhythm with a minimum of flash and a consistency that moves you every which way but *never* loose.

As if that was not enough, they also have the best kept secret in Britain today: their vocalist Bill Hurley.

He's an artist whose power and phrasing should guarantee him legendary status alongside Eric Burdon or Van Morrison with Them. Frankly, people like Graham Parker won't even get a look in when this bloke has his due. He is *sensational*.

A repertoire of over 20 songs creates the traditional R'n'B atmosphere, and then ventures into original and undiscovered territory. They resuscitated "Ain't Got You", and make "Don't Miss Your Water", "Mr Unreliable", "Talkin' 'Bout You" and "Club-A-Go-Go" sound like they were written yesterday.

Their versions of "Tallahassie Lassie" and "Dirty Water" won them a "Nuggets" of their own; but detailed analysis is pointless — words won't do them justice.

Given a willingness to experiment further with original songs and a shade more psychedelia as they enter some necessary progression, The Inmates will have it sewn up this time next year.

And you should be there too because you won't need to understand and hate computers; you won't have to pass comparison with Kafka or notice similarities between the drummer's stance and Chinese Imperialism. In fact, you won't need anything. . .except your feet and your imagination.

The Inmates are an R'n'B revelation; Bill Hurley is a one man revolution.

Better start practising again kids; the heavyweight title is no longer up for grabs.

Max Bell

The Members

Windsor Castle

Fuelled on beer and adrenalin, the crombied youth of Greater London can be an awesome spectacle.

A hefty contingent of teenagers from Willesden, Kingston, Woolwich and other far-flung places have converged on this Harrow Road hotspot; and the prevailing mood is a mixture of volatile edginess and adolescent bravado.

This is one of those proverbial nights that begins with an earthquake and steadily builds up to a climax.

This ain't rock'n'roll; this is Rent-a-Riot. This is the Sound of the Suburbs, which 36 hours after the event could not be dislodged from my reverberating head. I blame it on the boogie.

A mental stockpile of over-used gonzo epithets and superlatives doesn't come close to communicating the wreckless frenzy that is whipped up when the band finally cavort onto the stage to launch their campaign of musical demolition. For The Members (Virgin's newly-adopted Wunderkind) do not lend themselves easily to cool grammatical appraisal.

They open the set with a flailing instrumental, in which Jean-Marie Carroll frets his guitar with a mike stand. Suddenly the enigmatic Nicky Tesco trapezes over the monitors, like Gollum out of a tree, takes a quick slug of Suncrush, and abandons his herring-gutted frame to a phrenic Jagger-tantrum.

He looks extremely nervous. I think he frightened himself.

His eyes dart like tadpoles over a couple of skirmishes that have broken out near the stage. The melodrama is quicky resolved and absorbed into the mounting ebullience of the crowd. You could cut the air with a chainsaw.

Tesco's raucous voice is as rough as a bear's ass, and his contrived tunelessness is ideally suited to conveying the light'n'bitter mockery of the songs.

The group sound is an unremitting seige of delinquent energy that defies comparison with any other band — past or present. It's a dexadrinal fusion of Yardbeat, Rastaromp, and post-Punk pandemonium that leaves scars on your ear-drums and damages your spine if you try to stand still.

Their appeal extends beyond the pure mechanical wizardry and supercharged stage-antics. Their songs are sardonic slices of invective drawn from the crass ("Soho A Gogo"), the mundane ("Sound Of The Suburbs"), the sordid ("Love In A Lift"), the isolated ("Solitary Confinement"), and the repressive ("Ride In A Police Car") aspects of the essentially boring and limited lives that most of us, to a degree, are lumbered with.

Whether this enhances their credibility is anybody's guess; but when the music is as wild as this, words like 'credibility' are mere innuendo — and out the other side.

So come along and shed calories at the next Members' gig, and watch these bionic brats become very famous. The effect is shattering.

Rick Joseph

Above: the Sham gig beginning to disintegrate. Right: what it disintegrated into. Pix: ROB HALL. Far right: The MEMBERS' NICKY TESCO (pic GEORGE BODNAR)

Say 'allo to the new 'olton

Gary Holton's Gems

Nashville

"Poseur's Night at the Nashville," as the waggish Holton christened it.

This evening saw a return of the one-time Heavy Hetal Kid supremo (that group now one year's rust-encrusted) on a new career with a new band.

Say 'allo to the new Gary 'Olton, still the same diminutive Cockney theatric, all wrapped up in a big girl's blouse and suggestive of a Spanish waiter entertaining with Rod Stewart impressions. But now he's in partnership with a Birmingham and Irish combination, The Gems, adopted by the singer following the loss of their previous frontman, one Pretty Boy Ffloyd.

This occasion being one of the first public try-outs prior to the new act's formal launching, judgements might be premature; allowances must be made and all that. Just the same, by the set's conclusion, it was a relieved Mr Holton, gratified and encouraged, who took his leave of a well-won crowd.

The audition had been passed.

At least half the credit should go to The Gems, a shrewd and fortuitous choice on Holton's part because their hard and attractive style of rock, though too conventional to be especially interesting, proves itself equal to the vocalist's domineering and demanding presence.

Instrumentally the sound gains its character from the interplay of Mark Robbins' full-bodied keyboards with the abrasively aggressive guitar of Steve Jones pose-alike Dennis Forbes. Backing up are Don McNeilly on bass and drummer Martin Hughes. It's chunky, traditional stuff for the most part — Stones and Faces comparisons cross the mind — but rescued from anonymity by the quality of the material.

There's the lively "Aeroplane Food", "Soho So Good" and a song called "Problem" (which, as Holton candidly admitted, "sounded like one"), as well as the slower and sincerely-sung, "I Need A Drink".

Equally good is a lovely, mesmeric "Fade Away"; Holton's haunting performance underscored with a muted paramilitary beat, followed by the debut album title-cut "Shooting The Singer Is No Way To Stop The Opera". It's another slow, almost grandiose number and maybe the best medium for the vocalist's plaintive rasp.

I like it, the Nashville love it — and so, unfortunately, does Rat Scabies. Evidently tired and emotional the ex-celebrity commandeers a microphone to make certain we "fuckin' bozos" know about it, too.

If tonight's momentum can be maintained over the months to come then Gary Holton should get a second shot at the kind of success which finally eluded his last, turbulent incarnation.

Step aside Oliver, the Artful Dodger's back for more.

Paul Du Noyer

Poseurs Night at the Nashville . . . GARY HOLTON. *Pic: NIGEL S. HADLEY*

Ton Trix Fast Cars

Manchester

A rare event: two new bands with no pedigree whatsoever turned in highly acceptable performances on a quiet evening at the Factory.

Fast Cars were frantic and they're ripe to make a killing on the youth market. Starting with a near-perfect version of "Suffragette City", they romped boyishly through a rapid-fire set of teen anthems, tapping Gen X and even The Who, with the song "Images" bringing "Pictures Of Lily" into a surprisingly innocent '70s focus.

Pop songs with a punk attack may not sound promising, but Fast Cars suspend disbelief by injecting every chord with manic energy. Two tunes with a regional flavour — "Who Loves Jimmy Anderton" and "Tameside Girl" — should grant them local cult status. After that, The Undertones and co better watch out.

Ton Trix, a five-piece from Liverpool are also firmly anchored in the pop tradition; but they take a tidier, cooler, more sophisticated route.

Echoes of Roxy Music, XTC and particularly Blondie in their arrangements, with singer / rhythm guitarist Hambi Haralambous' imaginative romanticism colouring the material. "From My Room" was classic Liverpool, a multi-part opus on the general theme of ships that pass in the night, with subtle vocal chorusing and tinkling keyboard harmonics building up a slight melody into a kaleidoscopic *tour-de-force.*

Ton Trix are obviously still formative, but they already have a perceptible style to call their own; and they have the imagination and discipline to do well in the studio.

Two unashamedly orthodox bands who clearly believe that theorisation is no substitute for energy, that mental gymnastics are useless without application. Some may sneer, but I wish there were more like these.

Ian Wood

Drones

Moonlight Club

Unfortunately I arrived just in time for the first band, Nobodyz: you said it mate.

They're an under-rehearsed, unimaginative bunch fronted by yer regulation peroxide blonde lad (who can't be older than 13) unsuccessfully trying to turn himself upside down around the microphone. A few fans stupidly pogo from the first dischordant note; and time drags on . . .

Things get worse.

The Necromats behave in the new wave fashion but sound like heavy metal in parts. I must have lost a few million brain cells in that short spell. The vocals are inaudible, but we're treated to a drum solo midway; aren't you all impressed? I wasn't.

Time crawls by . . .

Finally, The Drones: a boring powerpop punk mob who can't decide who they are or what they're doing. Neither could I, and gave up halfway; I wish they had.

But they droned on and on and on . . .

Deanne Pearson

ROBERT JOHNSON

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Jab Jab could mean a knockout

Jab Jab

Marquee

After five years hard graft in their native Huddersfield and most points North, Jab Jab should be able to convince interested parties that their potential can be turned into something more positive.

This Marquee debut was initially beset by the perils of performance, but Jab Jab's enthusiasm and self-belief won over a small yet devoted corps of fans.

Their basic sound revolves around the distinctive doodlings of keyboards lynch pin Robert Whittington, several degrees right of XTC and more firmly planted in the Billy Smart tradition. The brothers Augustine (Joe on bass, Charlie on guitar) provide a hard undercurrent of Fender snarl, nods to Hendrix working out of a soulful bag that needs refining before Jab Jab commit themselves to vinyl.

They move fast and look the part; early spiky thrashings on "Pin For Dumpling" and "Quilly Quayaya" are exciting without breaking new ground. Reggae rhythms sit well on the band, but they aren't emulating any trends.

Drummer Skinhead Dick has his own style and his own line in idiosyncrasies, threadwise and thumpwise. He uses the cymbals effectively and operates well when the Augustines are employed on percussive chores. Having three strong characters helps guide the audience through some neat stylistic changes on the Caribbean flavoured "Kneel Down And Pray", and the more complex material like "Shaper" and "Green House".

Jab Jab aren't carrying any spare baggage either, and even tackle "All Along The Watchtower", making it a tribute with a twist.

They've paid them damn dues with change to spare, and it can only be a matter of time before some bright A&R man (if such an animal exists) recognises their force and signs them. Commercial music with a definite fun flavour running down the middle never did anyone any harm.

Check out Jab Jab, they may just put you on the canvas.

Max Bell

Blast Furnace And . . .

Hope and Anchor

Hemmed in by a congregation of teenage sharks from Finsbury Park, Highbury, and Islington — not to mention Kings Cross and St. Pancras, Euston, Warren Street and Oxford Circus — it was to all intents a further fulsome R'n'B exercise from the piledriving Blast Furnace And . . . at the Hope and . . .

Back in the line-up once again stood the band's original bassist B. Bop, deputising for the departed Kevin Allen; John Mackie beat a frenetic tattoo on drums at the rear; while upfront stood the motorvatin' trio of Blitz Kreig (rhythm/slide), Skid "Slim Harpo" Marx (harmonica), and not least, Karl Shaar Marx as Blast Furnace on lead vocals and guitar.

Bass with punch . . . JAB JAB. Pic: DENIS O'REGAN

However, this was to be their final London appearance, the members having subsequently decided to call it a day, and go their own separate ways. A shame, as a Blast Furnace And . . . gig always proved a most pleasant way of whiling away an evening.

They opened their set in customary furious fashion with "Moving On", before settling into the equally driving "Crosscut Saw", featuring lightning harp blowing from Skid Marx and some nice fluid lead picking from Blast.

Next up was the wry rocker "South Of The River" — the new single — vaguely derivative of "Driving Sideways" in its harp phrase, redeemed by a set of throwaway lyrics that I haven't stopped singing for days.

"Rude bwoys gonna make you quiver," warns Mr Furnace, *"you better keep something up your sleeve, when you go south of the river."*

Unlike many of the groups currently playing the R'n'B revival circuit in this man's town, Blast Furnace And . . . describe their own original compositions with a verve at least equal to the old blues masters.

Following "I Hear You Knockin'," Skid Marx played Ayatollah Khomeini as he temporarily replaced The Shaar as people's choice on two numbers written by and dedicated to "my hero Howling Wolf": "Worried 'Bout My Baby" and "Drink And A Woman". Unfortunately they lacked the same dignified delivery of a Chester Burnett, but they were rollicking, danceworthy efforts nonetheless, with strong rhythmic support from the band.

The pace remained hot and the basement bouncing as Blast resumed vocal control for a rendition of "I Can't Be Satisfied", the less outstanding "Keep On Dancing" (I stopped); and brought the set to a close with the brilliantly characteristic "You Can't Stop The Boy". We wouldn't want to anyway!

"Nobody appreciates the value of good press more than I-man," CSM once confided to me, "but I'd much rather earn an encore at the Hope or Nashville than a rave review in *Melody Maker* or *NME*."

Well, Blast Furnace And . . . certainly roused their crowd to an encore, even though time was running out; and the band was joined onstage by Johnny Guitar of The Bishops to "Rip It Up" in the manner of Little Richard, and extend a final thank you to its audience with "Back In The USA".

Forward in the UK.

Penny Reel

The Bishops

Electric Ballroom

Do *you* have trouble convincing friends there's a future for R'n'B? Then keep them away from The Bishops. Dedicated they may be, but so were Canned Heat.

The Bishops don't even cut it on a good-time Saturday nite level, for the simple reason they aim no higher. Woody Allen's remark on comedy applies: some people think this music's easy.

Dave Tice does, for one. Grafted onto the original fourpiece, he soon got this singing lark sussed. Practice your Brilleaux bellow, clench your fist at the mirror and you're laughing. Who needs frills like wit, phrasing and swing?

Pat McMullen (bass) and Paul Balbi (drums) are a pretty punchless rhythm section, happiest on the standard Diddley thump of "I Want Candy". Barring Johnny Guitar's doomy "Here Comes The Night" lines on "Could You, Would You", the guitars are energetic but strictly routine. The faster stuff is a featureless blur.

In this context, "Baby You're Wrong" and a new ballad sung by Zenon de Fleur are almost touching, each benefiting immeasurably from a non-Tice vocal. Zen and Johnny are hardly wizards of the larynx, but at least they sound vaguely expressive.

Then it's back to hollow bluster with "Down The Road Apiece" and "Shake Your Moneymaker", Zen's slide on the latter a pale echo of Elvin Bishop (no relation) on the Butterfield version.

Musically tatty, cheerless and almost empty, The Bishops are for R'n'B junkies only; and not unless the Feelgoods are out of town.

Harry George

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Punishment Of Luxury

Nashville

Christ it's tough in the rockcrit game.

It's no longer enough to like or dislike a band. "Are they contemporary?" that's the big one.

For this reason you'll have noticed that over the last few years anything fragmented and vaguely alienating gets the critical kid gloves. After all, the band *could* be ten years ahead of their time; and they could *even* be using standard rock instruments in a wholly new way.

Far harder to explain is why most writers seem to genuinely *enjoy* Punishment Of Luxury.

Just signed to UA after some lavish reviews, they perform to a Nashville crowd with a high ligger quotient who seemed suitably grateful for the privilege.

"Puppet Life", their Small Wonder single, is my introduction to Brian Bond, singer-actor-mime. Both the song and the mime are mildly arresting, with Bond clad in balaclava, crown and yellow plastic dungarees and talk-singing in the style popularised by Rex Harrison. So far so novel.

The other three are badly made-up for no apparent reason, except maybe to keep up with the Mime King. Nevilluxury, blond-haired and acting like the biggest jessie of them all, is simply a capable if orthodox rock guitarist.

"Poof", their celebrated attack on bigotry, is the first evidence of Punilux's appalling smugness. The point is obvious ("Anyone who doesn't shout Poof is a poof") and worth maybe 60 seconds of your valuable time. Instead, the dismal non-tune is extended to become fully as infuriating as the object of it's scorn.

Punilux also display naked contempt for 'ordinary people' and 'ordinary life', whatever *they* are. Hence the facile barbs of "Let's Get Married": no jibe is too glib for these boys.

Never trust anyone who harps an their lyrics in interviews (Punilux do). Good music speaks for itself, whether you're from Mars or Tyrannopolis.

I missed any meaning on "The Message": a bitty, interminable manifesto featuring unathoritative drumming. And Nevilluxury's occasionally interesting dismemberment of familiar guitar styles hardly compenstated for Bond's irritating singspeak.

In the right hands, arrogance and cynicism can be perversly attractive. But it would be far more beguiling than aything Punilux have to offer.

I caught five minutes of Essential Logic, out of Poly Styrene by Patti Smith. Laura Logic was agreeable if derivative, but the weedy sax made X-Ray Spex's Rudi Thomson sound like the new Coltrane.

Harry George

Jimmy Cliff and Oneness

Hammersmith Odeon

The curse of being a rock critic is that you can't simply enjoy a gig: you have to work out why, and wonder if you were wrong to like it at all.

I lapped up every minute of Jimmy Cliff, but I'm not sure I should have. As a songwriter, Cliff is living on his past reputation. Almost half his set comprised songs from his 1969 Trojan record (still his best), several of which later reappeared on the soundtrack album "The Harder They Come". Since then, he's done little of interest; just moved steadily towards an MOR pop audience.

And significantly there were few rootsmen in the Hammersmith crowd; just middle-class blacks and whites mingling together in casual affluence.

So there was defintely an air of nostalgia.

Early on, Cliff established himself with a trio of golden oldies — "You Can Get It If You Really Want It", "Beautiful World, Beautiful People", "My Ancestors" — and only then moved on to more recent songs.

And the music was safe, mainstream reggae; no risks or tricksy dub sophistication. But what rendered all these limitations utterly irrelevant was. . . *commitment*. Cliff sang superbly, and Oneness were brilliant.

He has always been a fine singer; his high, lilting voice can soar effortlessly over the most mundane lyric (and frequently does). Tonight, he sang from the heart, and it was just beautiful. A delicate figure, he'd take-off on brief, frantic dances, his white cape fluttering from his shoulders like a giant butterfly.

Oneness swayed and smiled around him with evident delight.

Their name is exactly right, the empathy confounding. At times, there were eight rhythmic variations weaving and sliding around each other with constant invention. The lead guitarists Ernest Ranglin and Earl 'Chinna' Smith would insert quick, spiky guitar solos or chase each other around fascinating detours that abruptly turned back into the flow of the music with immaculate precision.

The extended stop/start ending of "My Ancestors" was the first display of their power, but "Stand Up and Fight Back" was their highspot: a mediocre song turned into an aesthetic triumph by the consummate skill of the band.

As if this wasn't enough, the first encore had me totally transfixed.

Under a single white spotlight, Cliff sang "Many Rivers To Cross" with passionate intensity; he was literally shaking with emotion. And Ranglin threw in a solo that seemed to contain all the anguished blues you've ever heard and still sounded joyful.

A fast, celebratory "The Harder They Come" followed, and would have made a perfect ending. But the audience demanded more, and a second encore was the inevitable anti-climax.

I dare not complain. Jimmy Cliff, *phew!* Who would've believed it?

Graham Lock

B. BOND of P. LUX. Pic H. FEARN

The Osmonds

Rainbow

The band are on, the music's off. The lights are down, the banners are up. A wave of abject terror grips your reporter's quivering frame.

Piercing shrieks of ecstacy greet the opening chords, and a video film reminds us that the last four blissful years have passed all too swiftly.

The Scintillating Seven are back — and *how*.

We kick off with the dental duo: handsome Donny in cabaret drapes, and the svelte, spunky Marie sporting the first in a series of shimmering two-piece harem suits. They treat us to a couple of ditties from their recent screen special, memorable solely for its reckless title *Goin' Coconuts*.

They jive, they smile, and they split backstage sharpish as four flash figures bound into the spotlights, their blinding white trappings emblazoned with musical insignia.

"Hi . . . I'm Alan . . . I'm Wayne . . . I'm Merrill . . . and *I'm* Available," adds the dorkish Jay, as they shift into a dance routine that's like the death throes of a lurex locomotive. Extracts from *Grease* ensue, together with a romping disco spinner "Crazy Horses" featuring a Roy Rogers soundtrack plus automated jets of smoke.

Six down, one to go, and Little Jimmy shows for his solo spot.

The chubby one wears a silver polka-dot outfit and a grin like a suspension bridge. He shufties around stage with a roving mike, singing "Long-Haired Lover From Liverpool" while scores of innocents flip their lids.

The smarmy Jimbo scampers off into the wings to make way for the informal comedy section.

This simulates the cutesy, downhome feel of how leisure time is wiled away on the Mormon Ranch. Donny raps the keys in rinky tones, with Marie sitting prettily atop his white piano. Together they croon to the likes of "Paper Roses" and the Godawful "Puppy Love". Don, being into electronics, unveils a vocal modulator that makes him sound like anything from a cartoon chipmunk to Lee Marvin on downers, and some hapless photographer is singled out to give a demonstration.

The last half-hour is a multi-talent extravaganza, involving the toothsome foursome in an insufferable medley of Beatle hits, decked out in pastel Sgt Pepper jackets. "The Way We Were", in massed angelic acappella, falls flat as the video packs up, thankfully sparing us some early footage of *The Andy Williams Show*.

Lastly, we discover that your average Osmond, apart from singing and dancing in time with the music, also plays sax, banjo or trumpet with frivolous abandon. We also find that Marie's wardrobe includes diaphanous chiffon for the finale "You Are The Sunshine Of My Life", which they dedicated on the previous night to "Her Majesty" (Princess Margaret — who was well chuffed by all accounts).

It's all over, bar the screaming and the odd case of hysteria.

Yet the words of their mother Olive Osmond still ring with prophetic doom. "We believe," said she, "that the family is an eternal unit."

What have we done to deserve such ceaseless torment?

Mark Ellen

Nazareth

Glasgow

The tour for the album inspired by the book comes to the city of the title.

The book, *No Mean City* can claim much responsibility for making Glasgow a name feared wherever decent people walk. A mutant variation of its 'hero' Razor King, features on the cover of Nazareth's new album.

The No Mean City tour (Nazareth's first for nearly two years) sitll looks like being highly successful. Why is it that hard rock bands deserve such loyal fans who can remain patient between biennial tours/albums? And why, since the audiences remain so young, does anyone start to like a band whose best work was eight years ago?

Now Nazareth — an above average, occasionally-inspired, hard rock band with an underrated singer, armd only with Zal Cleminson, lots of money and some fancy new Dr Strange artwork of forgotten demons and Hell's Angels from lost netherworld caverns — plan to smash through the limitations of their present success.

Presumably they're aiming for the category of diverse belaserlightshowed, gimmick-ridden, plain cretinous American fave megastars who don't mean doodley squat over here, praise Zoroaster.

Above the stage the Nazareth logo flashes and flickers, branding the name subliminally on to 3,000 consumer brains. Below, the familiar, craggy Nazarenes do what they've been doing for years, while new guitarist, ex-SAHB Cleminson, prowls amongst them like a phantom future memory of clean, sci-fi movie rock bands; so sophisticated and slick does he appear in contrast to the others.

Enigmatic variation comes with an acoustic segment (!) when chairs are brought out and the band contrive to sound like J J Cale being tortured with accompaniment by Pentangle.

As with Nazareth's career the whole show is fairly enjoyable with occasional highlights, usually other people's songs ("This Flight Tonight" in particular). Although even that's blitzed by their own "Expect No Mercy".

If that level of dynamism had been kept up throughout it could have been a turning point in my life: onwards to heavy metal fandom — to Judas Priest, Rush and (gulp) even . . . Kiss; to a denim jacket, alcoholism and a final courtroom, pleading "I had to kill him, your honour, he tried to steal my Budgie albums".

However, this was only their second gig. The Germans at the end of the tour should get something a bit more special.

Glenn Gibson

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POSTERS**

DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL!

Tokyo plays Cambridge

BERNARD FUTTER checks out two amps from Eastern climes. . .

MOST hardware manufacturers would claim that amplifier technology has made considerable progress in recent years. Specifications have advanced to the degree that distortion values almost defy measurement.

Since on paper there seems little difference between the published specs of various manufactuers, you may be forgiven for thinking that all amplifiers sound the same.

This neatly overlooks the situation familiar to other branches of sound reproduction, namely that there is not a reliable correlation between spec and sonic performance. In short, specs can't tell you what a unit will *sound* like.

Proof of this has been the incredible resurgence of interest in valves.

Because of their bulkiness, heat losses and theoretically higher distortion, valves were quickly rendered obsolete by the transistor explosion in the '60s. However, in the opinion of many, for naturalness, recreation of ambience and the resolution of fine detail, the valve is superior to any transistor design irrespective of the price.

The somewhat derogatary term "transistor sound" has been coined to convey the greyness and steelyness present in many current designs.

Before whetting your appetite for the unique valve sound, I should point out that you either need to be lucky, wealthy or both. Old Quad and Radford models can still be found at reasonable prices or alternatively there are the new generation valve amps costing several hundred pounds from TVA, Lux and Radford.

Still, in practical terms, the choice for most people will be a transistorised unit and there are some good models around to choose from.

The role of the amplifier in a hi-fi system is to boost the minute audio signals received from the pick-up cartridge, radio tuner or tape source in order to drive loudspeakers.

The amplifier is constructed in two parts: the *pre-amplifier* provides the switching between various inputs and the volume and tone controls, and also steps up the signal sufficiently so that it can be enlarged up to several hundred times by the *power* amplifier.

This it should do without adding any distortion along the way.

The enthusiast may well buy his pre and power amplifiers separately for the ultimate in flexibility, but more usually they are integrated in one complete unit. (Or combined with a tuner section to form a receiver.)

When thinking about buying an amplifier it will be necessary to determine the power rating required.

Power output is stated in watts.

In an average room size with reasonably efficient speakers, 25-30 watts per channel should be adequate.

Output can be truthfully stated in many ways and some manufacturers use the terms peak of music power to inflate their claims. But the most universally accepted measurement is WRMS with both channels driven from 20-20,000 Hz (8 ohms). This is the power reached before exceeding published distortion right across the frequency band.

Although most listening is carried out at under ten watts per channel it's wise to make sure your amp has got something in reserve to handle musical peaks. Don't however, break the bank getting more power than you need. A 100 watts will not seem anywhere near twice the volume of 50 watts.

If the rating of your amp is higher than the maximum input recommended by the speaker manufactuer, great care must be exercised. An accidental tug on a lead could easily damage a drive unit.

Facilities offered by most manufacturers are pretty standard and usually include switching for a separate pair of speakers and a headphone socket. The Japanese now install power output meters — probably received with great enthusiasm on the American market but next to useless.

MOVING OVER to the subjects of this month's review it would not be possible to have a greater contrast in design philosophies.

On one hand, we have the **AU 217** from Japan's mighty **Sansui Corporation,** whose particular claim to fame rests with some very high quality receivers and tuners.

Our other contender is the **A60** from the pioneering **Amplification And Recording Company** of Cambridge, formed by an enthusiastic group of university graduates a couple of years ago. But their production techniques are not intensive.

Both units are nominally rates at 30 + 30 watts RMS.

Listening tests were carried out over the course of two weeks utilising our usual direct cut and good commercial pressings, as well as ¼ master tapes. Ancillary equipment included a pair of the excellent Tangent TM3 speakers (see below), and as a reference a highly esteemed Quad valve amp.

Starting with the Sansui AU 217 the first thing that strikes you is the very appealing low profile presentation and moody black finish.

Provision is made for rack mounting and brackets are provided for the purpose. The controls are very smooth and positive in operation and the volume knob has click stops for readily repeatable settings.

Two filters are provided, a high cut to eliminate record scratches or tape hiss, and a subsonic for warped records. There is also a loudness switch which boosts bass and treble to compensate for the ears' difficulties with these frequencies at low levels.

Yes, tone controls will do the self same thing!

Sansui boldly take the battle into the enemy's camp by repeated mention of the word "musicality" in their literature. This is a term considered to be the trademark of the British "new wave" enthusiasts.

Subjectively the sound quality of the AU 217 was a little disappointing. Although there was none of the stridency or brittleness associated with many Japanese designs, the sound had a rather light and airy characteristic. There was a fair amount of detail but without much bite or attack.

In summary the AU 217 is easy on the ear and its light sound should do much to complement dim sounding speakers.

Although finished in black the A60 provides something of a contrast from the Sansui unit. It is about half the depth of the AU 217 and is encased in a wooden sleeve. Ours was black but other finishes are available.

The appearance is somewhat austere, with a row of push button selectors for inputs, high filter and mono and rotary knobs for volume, tone and balance. There is a large on/off rocker switch which does not earn many marks for subtlety.

Listening tests quickly confirmed that the A60 is a very high quality performer. Far from exhibiting the usual grey transistor sound, it was gutsy with a lot of punch.

Compared to the Quad valve, the A60 sounded thicker with less clarity and inner detail, but this effect was not pronounced. For those of you who like your music raw I can whole heartedly recommend this unit. It even gave a good account of itself driving the difficult load presented by the Quad Electrostatic speakers.

This was something of an unfair test for an amp of this price but says much for its operational stability.

About **Tangent:**

Tangent Acoustics are a smallish manufacturer based, like A&R, near Cambridge, who have earned an enviable reputation. The TM1 is a two way system which gave a very good account of itself during our amp trials. The mid range is very open and detailed and although the bass was on the full side, stand mounting brought about an immediate improvement. Often recommended as a basis for a system with the A60, the TM1's gave a very good showing.

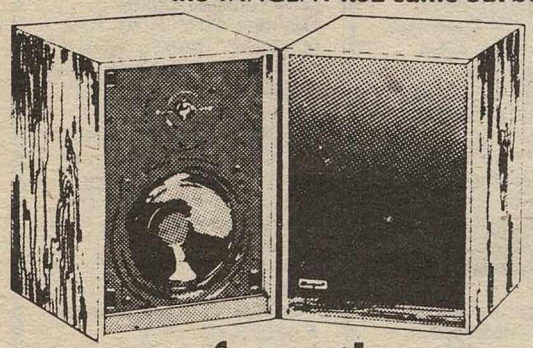
Sansui AU 217: Typical selling price £120 — Sansui Audio Europe, Unit 10A, Lyon Way, Rockware Avenue, Greenford, Middlesex.

A60: Typical Selling price £160 — A&R, French's Mill, French's Road, Cambridge.

Tangent TM1: Typical selling price £152 pr. — Tangent Acoustics, Viking Way, Bar Hill, Cambridge.

small is beautiful

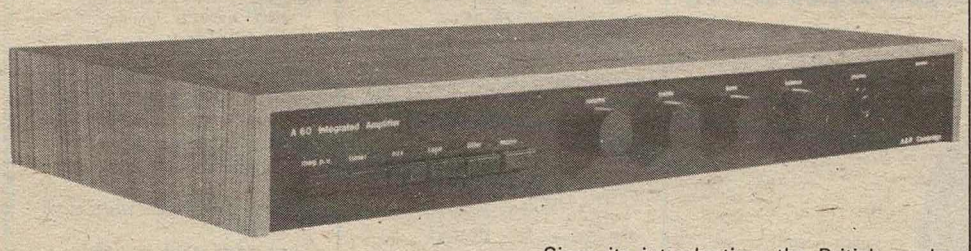
Simon Hedges and Chris Hunt of What Hi-Fi? put their ears together to check out four British loudspeakers in the £100-£150 price bracket. Smallest of the units, the TANGENT RS2 came out best – they had this to say:-



"Listening to the RS2s it became obvious that the designer had gone all out for spaciousness of sound — and had achieved it in no uncertain terms. Imagery in terms of left-to-right spread, depth and space around the instruments was quite stunning.
For the first time in our listening tests we became unaware of the existence of two boxes pumping out sound and conscious instead of a coherent and stable sound stage spread between them."

from the superb range of Tangent

The A60 amplifier still unrivalled in its class.



"The A60 is an amplifier that sounds good as well as measuring well. And this is what has distinguished the A & R from most of its competitors — it sounds better"
John Peel, Hi-Fi Buyers Guide, Sept. '77

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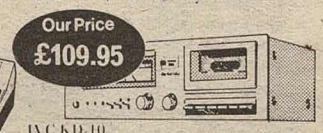

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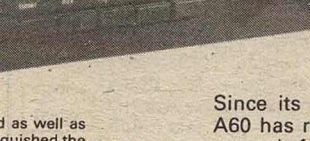

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"I thoroughly recommend it".

Gt a gd jb & mo pa as a Systems Analyst

After reading J-J Burnel's "Systems", I couldn't help but notice that all he'd done was very mild-manneredly summarize different forms of repression complete with endless watered down cures, etc.

It's illogical but true that it's better to be a willing part of something that is basically spurious but exciting, than of something which is basically true but boring and ordinary. Fantasy exists, so therefore does reality.

Socialism is but humane state capitalism. There will never be a socialist revolution here and it's naive to think there will be. Russia, by the way, is Communist, not Socialist.

Illiteracy never stopped people thinking for themselves though I agree it does take longer to progress.

"Systems" wasn't patronising, just lacking anything new. Your "slaves", Mr. Burnel, if they did act together to free themselves from exploitation, would invent unions and strikes. Freedom to strike is democracy at its best. So at the end of the day we still all endeavour to feather our own nests, automatically, but unfortunately at others' expense.

Finally, getting into court on petty offences does seem a little childish, but it is fun reading about it and something for you to write home about.
BOB WILLIAMS, Chelmsford, Essex.

Your 2nd paragraph: surely you mean "more enjoyable" rather than "better"? Your 3rd: Russia is fascist/imperialist. Your 5th: "Freedom to strike" = "Democracy at its best"? An ideal democracy would therefore be permanently on strike, *nicht wahr?* **— MB**

The obvious implications of J. J. Burnel's arguments are that if you're physically able to overthrow the system, you might as well do so. Hence, might is right, hence dictatorship/fascism by force. A democracy will stay a democracy if people choose to exercise their democratic rights — and will be flexible while people bend it in this way. To break it is simply to replace one problem with another — and I'm betting on the present one as being more attractive than JJ's macho Hell's Angel alternative.
MARTIN SCOTT, Queens' College, Cambridge.
You said it — MB

I used to think Jean-Jacques Burnel was a pretentious bore, till I discovered "SYSTEMS". Now I *know* he is.

Anyone can get stoned while doing their homework, but most of us keep this obnoxious habit to ourselves instead of inflicting half-pages of waffle on innocent members of the public.

No I didn't need to look up "monosyllabic" but I suspect J-J had to.
SUSAN READ, Farnborough, Hants.
As for me, I had to look up "obnoxious" — MB

DID YOU know that your Bag page contained approx. 10,288 words last week? Of course I'm not taking into account the pictures.
STEVE W., Stoke-on-Trent.

This is an inaccurate computation — MB

We at Release feel that we must reply to Max Bell's snide attack on our benefit evening. He obviously doesn't understand what a benefit dance is all about and that the aim is to raise money for worthy causes.

I happened to be on the door when Mr. Bell came in and he flashed his press card expecting me to be impressed. Since it was a benefit at a fairly small dance hall, we were not operating a "guest list" and I insisted that Mr. Bell pay. His fiver was for two people, not one as was implied in the article. As for the "Camden socialites", only about a quarter of the people at the benefit had bought advance tickets through Release and the majority there were the usual Dingwall's crowd.

For Mr Bell's information, the benefit was to help raise money for Release's new Bust Book in order for us to be able to keep the price of the book down to £1.25 and to support Release's work. The benefit raised several hundred pounds for Release which provides free legal advice to over 10,000 people a year. I just hope that Mr. Bell keeps his nose clean as he may have to end up paying for his advice if he gets into trouble with the law.
Christian Wolmar,
Gosh! I'm ever so sorry — MB

Can I just congratulate Ian & The Blocks on the success of their very wonderful "Rhythm Stick" and say how much I look forward to being stuck outside of their next London gig ticketless whilst thousands of boppers who only know two singles are inside watching *my* hero.
A CYNICAL BUT LOYAL BLOCKHEAD, Stamford Bridge Section.
A pity — 'cos it was a *great, great* concert — perhaps the best Ian has ever done. I would *hate* to have missed it myself. Gee, I really feel sorry for you etc. etc. (continued p.49) — MB

Dear Creeps,

It was very flattering to see in last week's *NME* that you had selected my very own entries to your Ramones competition for especial vilification.

Having been referred to not only as 'a pinhead' but also 'D-U-M-B', my obvious delight at having joined that far-from-select bunch who have been mercilessly slagged off in your rag was somewhat abated by the fact that you omitted to actually print my name. As I have an overwhelming desire to be famous, I should be grateful if you would be kind enough to rectify this forthwith and tout de suite.
JANE GARCIA, Acton, London W.3
With reference to T.P. & J.B.'s remarks about the lyrics of "Is Your Love In Vain", I was under the impression that women's liberation meant a woman doing as she pleases whether she wants to be a journalist, docker, politician or whatever, and also if she wants to do cooking, sewing and flower growing for Bob Dylan or anybody else. To me it's a song about Dylan and a consenting adult falling in love. The woman can always tell him to sling his hook.
ANGIE, Bognor Regis, Sussex.
Funny, to me it's all about Dylan telling the Consenting Adult to sling *her* hook — MB

It seems to me that this page includes a good deal of useless information so I hope you include this as useful.
ANDREW MILES, Oakham, Leics.
If it keeps you happy — MB

So, Mr. Parsons done it again eh? Got a solution why punk will never die.
"Because King Olaf ain't no human being", my ass. Who the hell is "King Olaf" anyway? The Swedish King is called Carl-Gustav and the Norwegian one is usually called *Olav*. If Mr. Parsons has to finish off with a smart-ass comment, he should bother to check the facts first. Even if no-one is interested in Scandinavian kings.
FINN BJELKE, Oslo.

My trouble exactly — HAMLET.

I am writing to protest at the articles on Crass. The song "Asylum" is not, and can not be, an attack on Christianity's fear of sexuality and obsession with death. It cannot be, because Christianity has no fear of sexuality and obsession with death. The first point can be proved by a quotation from the Song of Solomon, when Solomon says How beautiful your tripping feet, O queenly maiden. Your rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of the most skilled craftsmen. Your navel is lovely as a goblet filled with wine. Your waist is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies. Your two breasts are like two fawns, yes, lovely twins' . . . 'The king is held captive in your queenly tresses.' The language may be unfamiliar but the implication is unmistakable.
JANATHAN PIESSE, New Costessey, Norwich.

Yes, you prune, but Solomon was not, repeat, not a Christian. — MB

Re. Andre Klarenberg's letter of January 20th.

His point of contention seems familiar to that of Orwell in Politics and the English Language; that everyday, unadorned English is superior to "purple prose". Classicism is, indeed, ludicrously out of place in the *NME*, but should a writer compromise his thought patterns, his writing style to suit the minds of a clique of discontented readers? Form and content are irrevocably bound together, like it or not. Prose is an imperfect medium for the communication of emotions tenuous concepts; mundane English is inadequate for this function of criticism. For moribund cliches reads *Snouds* or *Punch*.

I am not a close friend of Paul Morley.
TEZ, The nice part of Leicester.

I'd just like to come in at this point and endorse the answer above — KING SOLOMON (of mines fame).

If everyone who now claims to have seen the Pistols at the Lesser Free Trade Hall in '76 had actually been there they would have filled Wembley Stadium.
MARTYN, Grasscroft.
Or, alternatively, those fabled mines of mine — KING SOLOMON.

I took a walk last night down to "Sensation Boulevard" where I met a "Dreamy Lady" and we danced all night in the "Ballrooms Of Mars". We danced the "Chariot Choogle". She told me she loved to boogie and I told her that "I Love To Boogie" too.

We left the "Ballrooms Of Mars" at "Midnight" and passed the "Wizzard" on the way home. Ours was a "Hot Love" and we did the "Beltane Walk" all the way to my car "Thunder Wing".

She was a real "Lady" and I was a "20th Century Boy". We reached her flat and I dropped her off. She said her "Tenement Lady" wouldn't mind her being "Foxy Roxy Punctured and Funky Born Free".

She left me in my "Universe" "All Alone". "Life Is Strange".

Bolonic Elfs live forever.
S. WEBB, Cheshire.
You don't say? — MB

You evidently set quite a lot of store by the results of your Poll, saying that they justify your policy of writing about new bands and ignoring or slagging old ones. I quite agree with you. But I hope you take just as much notice of the "Creep of the Year" section, Julie Burchill came no lower than third, which, to paraphrase your own words, is no mean achievement when you live in the same galaxy as Tony Parsons.
C. H. PACKMAN, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
Tunbridge Wells? — MB

Dear NME Editorial,

Send me New Musical Express from 30-12-78.
LEIF CHRISTENSEN, Denmark.
It'll cost ya. — KING SOLOMON

Greasy Middleman: MAX BELL

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T-ZERS

GETS CUTE

Pic: ANNE STATES

Allow T-zers *to introduce you to Kate and Cindy, two all-American ladies from all-American band B52's, the biggest thing to come out of Athens Georgia since ... well, actually we don't know anything else, small or large, that's ever come out of Athens Georgia. All we know is that Paul Rambali elected the B-52's 'Rock Lobster' as one of his fabbest singles of '78, that they received a rave write-up in 'On The Town' last summer, and that US record company A&R men are currently stubbing out their cigars in each other's faces to sign them. Actually we do know more but we're not telling until next week. See ya then.*

WAKE UP! How many famous groups whose names begin with 'B' can you think of who come from Manchester apart from **Buzzcocks** and **The Bee Gees?** Quick! Your life could depend on speed and accuracy of thought and recollection, and you've got until the end of this *Teazerz* column to think of a few. Go-go-go!

While you're reminiscing and ratiocinating, we are loftily amused to inform you that **Elvis Costello** was thoroughly put out with **Nick Kent's** report on his impromptu group-therapy session last week. Special-guesting on Capital Radio's *Your Mother* the Wednesday the piece hit the streets, Elvis dee-jayed the entire programme, picking — among others — Left Bank's "Walk Away Renee", **The Jackson 5's** "I Want You Back", **Sandie Shaw's** "Girl Don't Come", **The Pretenders'** "Stop Your Sobbing", **The Jam's** "Billy Hunt" and **The Bay City Rollers'** "Rock And Roll Love Letter".

In between times, the Big El admitted that the Dominion gigs were "a mistake": they were trying something different because the Rainbow and the Hammersmith Odeon are "boring" and the Rondhouse is ungiggable nowadays, but the Dom turned out "too plush".

When **Nicky** (special friend of **The Clash**) **Horne** mentioned the Kent piece and murmured, "There's a couple of things I wanna ask you about that, Elvis," Costello muttered darkly, "There's a couple of things I wanna ask *him*."

What can we say, El ... except that our door (and Nick's) is always open for frank and uninhibited discussion so long as you don't bring *too* many of your mates with you. Incidentally, Elvis will apparently be granting full-length interviews to *Time, Newsweek* and *Rolling Stone* when next in the Americas, and we here at *T-Zerz* say that that is only what is right, fair and proper, since *Stone* and the others where right in there punching when Elvis was playing his first gigs supporting **The Electric Chairs** and playing the Nashville. As "Armed Forces" crashes the barricades of the American album chart at 46 first-week-in, we raise our hands in slaute and wonder why some of the triple dots are muttering that they'll be very, *very* surprised if they see **Nick Lowe's** production credit on the next batch of EC recordings ...

Dark days for independent record companies in the USA: A&M Records (one of the major American indies) will soon be running for shelter under the RCA umbrella for pressing and distribution, and word hath it that Motown will soon be seeking a similar deal with CBS. This, effectively, puts virtually all of the American record business in the hands of the megaliths. You know: WEA, RCA, CBS, Polygram and the others. Capitol (EMI to you) is soon to be taking over Arista, and Polygram (the Polydor/Phonogram combine) is ABC Records. More labels in the hands of less people, and bigger, richer ones to boot ...

Still in the world of high finance, what is allegedly "The rarest record in the world" (*It must be rare — Roy Carr hasn't got it —Ed*) was recently sold for the impressive sum of $3866 by a California record dealer. The platter in question was "Stormy Weather" by **The Five Sharps** on Jubilee Records, and the copy sold is the only known playable example of this rarest of '78s. The lucky purchasers copped the prize when they decided to stop bidding against each other and join forces, and isn't there a lesson in that for all of us? ...

Memo to **Lynott** and **Geldof**: the following items are not to be taken personally. It just so happens that **Horslips** recently played the Lilac Ballroom Cardonagh, in County Donegal, and during the course of the proceedings they heard what they thought was a seriously malfunctioning PA. Instead, in turned out to be four masked raiders (one of whom was toting a tommy-gun) ripping off the box-office in the foyer. After splitting with the ackers, the tea-leaves returned a short time later complaining at the skimpiness of their haul, a mere £170. When informed that the rest of the bread had already been banked, one of the raiders riposted, "Oh God, we had a puncture, I'm sorry". At this point, one of the ballroom's bouncers dared the goon with the gun to fire his weapon. The goon complied and then the gunslingers re-split, in the process hijacking a car in which a couple were exchanging bodily fluids in the back seat. It could've happened anywhere, we admit, but it did actually turn out to be Ireland ...

Meanwhile, a series of anti-alcoholism TV commercials ot be shown in the Irish Republic (annual booze consumption around £400,000,000) include film of, references to and music from such notables as **Brian Jones, Keith Moon, Janis Joplin, Johnny Cash** and **Kris Kristofferson**. Director **Phil Walsh** sez, "We're out to shock, to show youngsters what excessive drinking can do. We used stars because they are heroes to the young" ...

Only Ones drummer **Mike Kellie** didn't even get as far as the Emerald Isle. He was arrested at Heathrow last week as he and his colleagues prepared to board a plane en route to a series of Oirish gigs. Two representatives of the Special Branch hauled the spluttering percussionist away to serve him with a warrant pertaining to a two-year-old driving offence. He made it to all the gigs in time, by the way — just for all you happy ending fans ...

Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Smokey Robinson and **Marvin Gaye** collaborated on a single called "Pops We Love You", a tribute to **Berry Gordy** (proud papa of Motown founder **Berry Gordy Jr**) to mark the occasion of his 90th birthday. The elderly Gordy was so overwhelmed by this display of regard that he upped and died ...

Togevverness: **Patti Smiff** is recording her fourth album with **Todd Rundgren** at the controls. Isn't *everybody* (yawwwwwwwwn) recording with ol' Rodd Tungsten nowadays? Is this some weird and obscure form of rock and roll penance? Thought of any more Manchester bands beginning with 'B' yet? ...

Ultravox, Only Ones and **Chelsea** are all due to play New York in the near future despite none of them having a US record deal. All **Clash** gigs that haven't been cancelled (ulp) have sold out ...

We read with interest in *New Style* ragazine that theatrical agent **Peggy Ramsay** is having difficulty persuading any of her stable of writers to accept a certain assignment. What might the job in question be, we ask archly? We-e-e-e-e-llll, it seems that **Paul McCartney** has dreamed up a film project and wants it scripted . The reason that none of Ms Ramsay's writers will touch it is, apparently, because the project has to star Paul's lovely and talented wife and collaborator **Linda** ...

Wow! On second thoughts make that Waaaauuuuuugghhhhh! just to celebrate **Howard The Duck's** appearance on the coveted page 7 position in this week's fab ish. We've heard only just this very minute that Loopy **Lou Reed's** next album is "heavily jazz based" and was recorded in Chermany. And remember, Lou is hipper than we are — he said so himself ...

Also layin down dem trax inna studio: **The Members,** who hope that some of their debut album will be produced under the watchful eye of **Niney The Observer,** and **Ian Dury** finally getting around to following up "New Boots And Panties!!" under the direction of the Old Kent Road ...

Waaauuuuugghhhhhhh again!! **Aynsley Dunbar** and **Jess Roden** have just — don't all collapse at once — joined the **Jefferson Starship. Paul Rambali** wishes to know which one of them is **Grace Slick's** replacement. The rest of us definitely *don't* want to know which one of them is about to fall victim to alcoholism and a chronic weight problem ...

Misprunt of the weke: In Rock Against Racism's *Temporary Hoarding* magazine, **Mark Perry** demands free raping on stage. Inform us in writing that you meant "free rapping" Mark, and we won't stick **Graham Lock** onto you ...

Facinating trivia: anybody who wanted to know who the **Ten Pole Tudor** featured on the *Rock'n'Roll Swindle* soundtrack actually is, be warned. Answering to the name of **Eddy Tudor Pole,** he functioned as lead singer with **The Visitors** and **C Gas 5** and — so we hear — he is currently telling everybody who'll listen that he's going to be joining **The Sex Pistols** ...

The **Peter Gabriel/Tom Robinson** Xmas Eve gig raised £3000 for The Association Of One Parent Families and the Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association, you'll be glad to know ...

Okay, time's up. Got your list of Manchester bands beginning with 'B' together yet? Neither have we. This means that next week someone else will be writing *T-Zerz.* Tell Mother we died game (or fowl, as the case may be).

Waaaaaauuuuuuaaaahhhhhh

Serious one this: following last week's *Thrills* story about the attempts by Colchester-based singer **Steve Greenfield** to pass himself off as **Marc Bolan's** brother, using the pseudonym Steve Ashley, *NME* was contacted by the manager of real, live and hard working folk singer **Steve Ashley** who was understandably distressed that Greenfield had taken his name for the tasteless hoax. So was *Thrills,* since we published a pic of the real Steve Ashley, understandably confusing him with the Greenfield/Ashley/Bolan person. Apologies to the real Steve Ashley for any inconvenience and embarrassment. And as a postscript to this *T-zer;* The *Sun* picked up the story for its page three a week later. Needless to say the investigative muscle of *NME* and *Thrills* received no credit ...

This week's Kung Fu corner: Marie Osmond prepares to block Van Morrison's elbow smash while Phil Lynott keeps an eye just about open to see if Princess Margaret has arrived yet. Is this an example of a rock star being upwardly mobile in the best Michael Philip Jagger tradition or what? Is this picture by Chalkie Davies or what?

BETTER BADGES

TOP TEN

This week		Last week
1	CLASH POLICE	2
2	PIL	2
3	BUZZCOCKS	4
4	ALTERNATIVE ULSTER	9
5	999	–
6	PENETRATION	–
7	ANARCHY IN THE U.K.	–
8	THE JAM	3
9	SMIRKS AGAINST TRAVOLTA	5
10	THE SLITS	–

30p Drunks Punk, Drug Users Against Nazis. **25p** Tapper, Herbsman, What You See, Gen. X, Arts No. 6. **20p** More Rope, Sham, Cabaret Voltaire, Raiders, Fairies, Doomed, Kraftwerk, Parsons, Burchill, Gauche Siouxsie, ½ Japanese, Metal Urbain, Buzzcocks Pink, Buzzcocks Promises, Fugs, Chrome, Sons of Joh, Monochrome Set, Members, Doll by Doll, The Night, All Mod Cons, Tube Station.

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Published by IPC Magazines Limited, Kings Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London, SE1 9LS, at the recommended maximum price shown on the cover. Editorial and Advertisement Offices: Kings Reach, Stamford St., S.E.1. Printed in England by Northamptonshire Newspapers Limited, Kettering, Northants. T.U. Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper. Sole Agents, Australia and New Zealand, Gordon & Gotch (Asia) Ltd., South Africa, Central News Agency Ltd., East Africa, Stationery and Office Supplies Ltd. Publishers.

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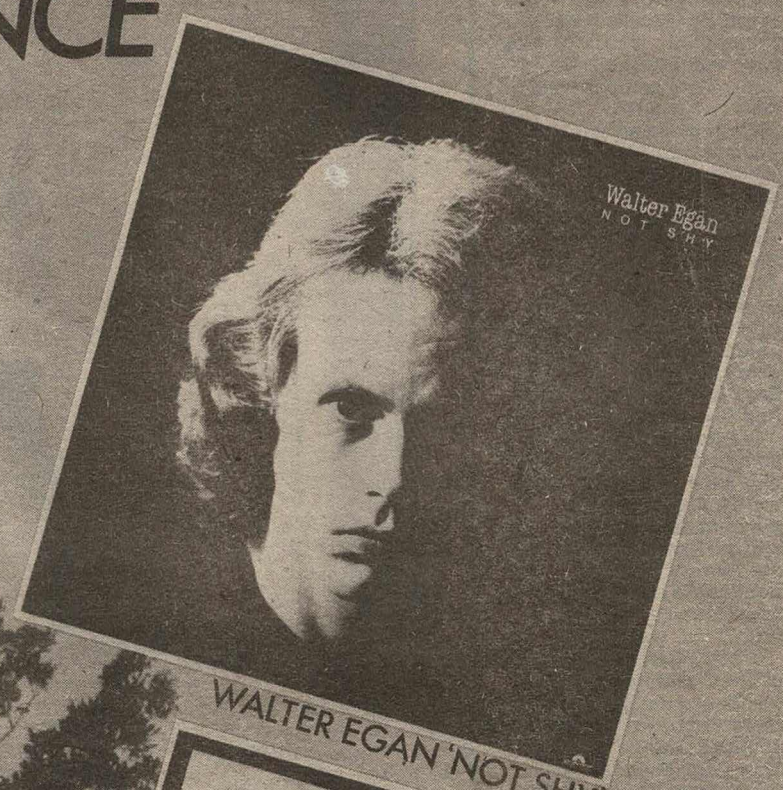

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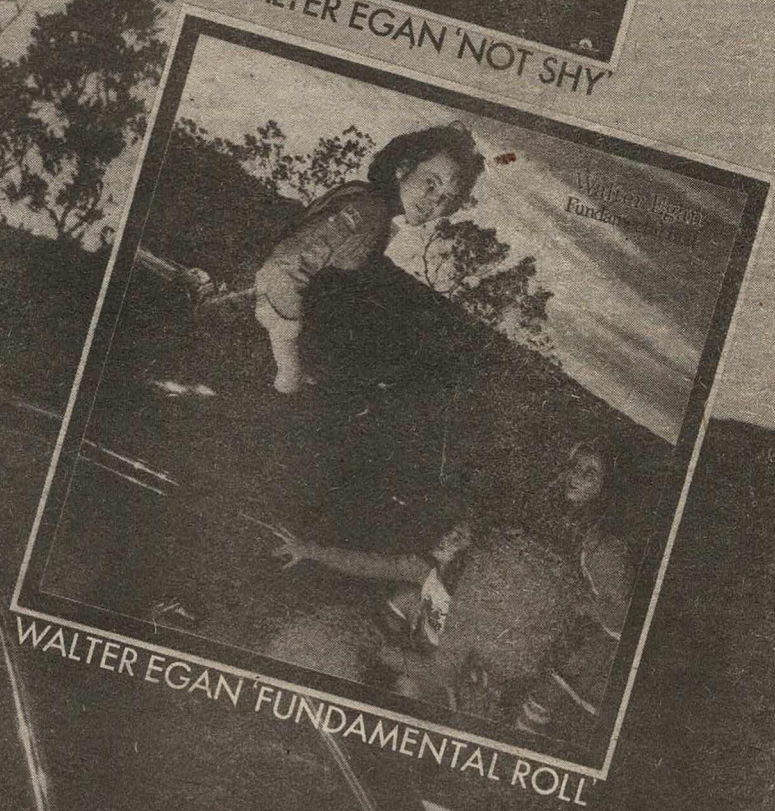

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